

Prospects & Possibilities

For South Dakota

BUSH FOUNDATION

courageous **LEADERSHIP** | sustainable **SOLUTIONS** | vital **COMMUNITIES**

*Report Prepared by the Bush Foundation
March 23, 2011*

Prospects & Possibilities community conversations were made possible with the help of local partners:



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Overview

In 2010, the Bush Foundation sought to learn about the prospects and possibilities for South Dakota by engaging in community meetings and through a random, statewide survey of residents.

The Bush Foundation, in partnership with four convening organizations, hosted 35 community conversations in 29 communities between September 30 and December 16, 2010. Our goal was simple: ***to give community members the opportunity to talk about the prospects and possibilities for their community and state – both strengths and concerns – and to generate ideas for ways to address the concerns.***

We believe that the best solutions often come from within the community itself, especially if community members are given access to good information and opportunities to engage with each other in meaningful ways. Therefore, the meetings were designed to share information about the trends affecting the future of South Dakota and allow community members to connect through conversation. To view this information, read the complete notes from the sessions or to weigh in with your ideas and opinions, go to CitiZing.org/projects/southdakota.

To validate findings from the meetings, the Bush Foundation commissioned Wilder Research to conduct a random, statewide survey of South Dakota residents in December 2010. The survey sought to understand residents' opinions about how leadership is exercised in their communities, as well as what residents believe are the best options for solving the state's issues.

This report is designed to:

- Summarize high-level, statewide themes from the *Prospects & Possibilities* sessions and survey of residents.
- Share top concerns and ideas generated during the sessions, including some anecdotal comments about ways the issues manifest themselves and ways they can be solved.
- Present key demographic and quantitative data from the sessions and survey.

Meeting participants agreed that more people need to get involved in discussions like these, and many expressed regret that they didn't have more time to discuss the issues. They also thought that the state's elected and appointed leaders would benefit from tapping into the collective energy and wisdom of people across the state. This report is not intended to be the end of the process; it's the start of what we hope will be an ongoing dialogue.

About the Bush Foundation

Since its beginning in 1953, the Bush Foundation has invested in the vitality of communities across Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and the 23 Native nations that share the same geography. Today these communities face fundamental changes in their prospects and possibilities. These are not short-term conditions, but rather a new long-term reality that will affect the vitality of communities and the people in them for decades to come. Adapting to this new reality will pose tough problems that are complex, challenge the status quo, will not be solved with business-as-usual approaches, and will require change by whole communities.

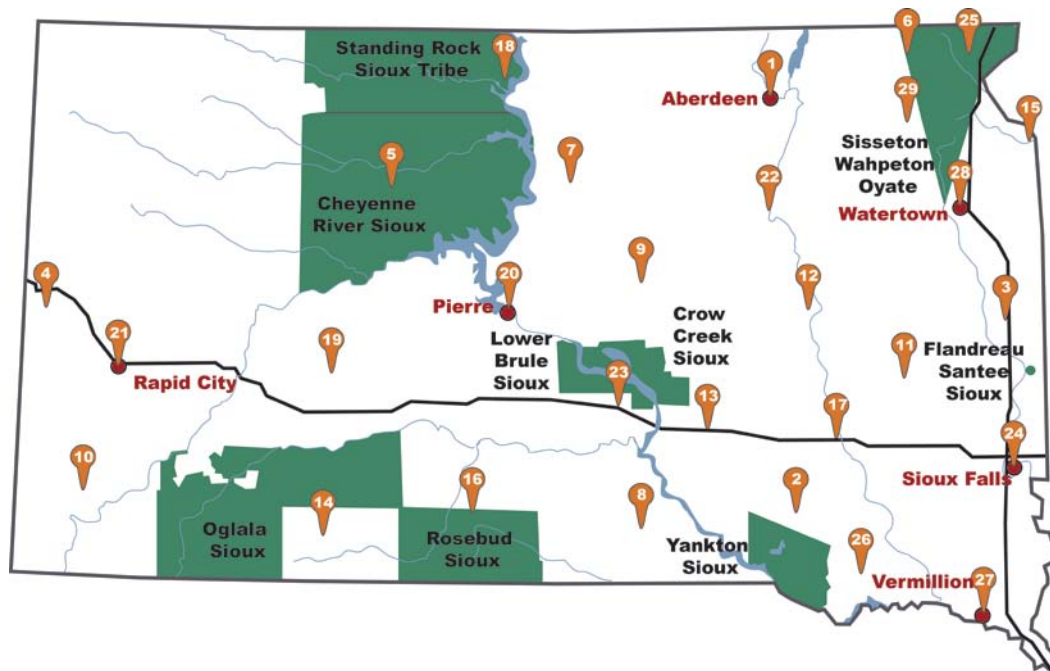
We work in two different ways to support communities that are confronting these challenges. First, we commit ourselves to finding solutions to specific problems toward which we believe we can make a significant contribution. Today, we are involved in two such decade-long commitments: improving educational achievement and supporting the self-determination of Native nations.

Second, we help communities develop their capacity to solve their own tough public problems. We do this through a combination of leadership development and by providing research, data, tools, and opportunities to connect with others that are needed for developing innovative and sustainable solutions.

Through this work, the Bush Foundation is a catalyst for the courageous leadership necessary to create sustainable solutions to tough public problems and ensure community vitality.

South Dakota Prospects & Possibilities Sessions

The map and legend below show the locations of the South Dakota sessions. See page 34 for a complete listing of the meeting dates, times and convening organizations.



Location #	City/Town
1	Aberdeen
2	Armour
3	Brookings
4	Deadwood
5	Eagle Butte
6	Ft. Sisseton
7	Gettysburg
8	Gregory
9	Highmore
10	Hot Springs
11	Howard
12	Huron
13	Kimball
14	Martin
15	Milbank

Location #	City/Town
16	Mission
17	Mitchell
18	Mobridge
19	Philip
20	Pierre
21	Rapid City (3 sessions)
22	Redfield
23	Reliance
24	Sioux Falls (5 sessions)
25	Sisseton
26	Tyndall
27	Vermillion
28	Watertown
29	Webster

Key Themes

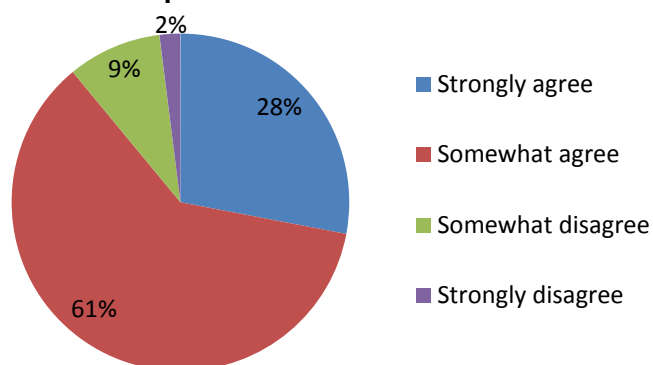
South Dakotans Want to Be Engaged and Be Part of the Solution

When the Bush Foundation embarked upon this project, it was with a fundamental belief that community members understand better than anyone the reality of the issues facing their communities and state, and that they are best positioned to make decisions about what path to follow.

While all participants agreed that tough choices need to be made, the community members were pleased to participate in the sessions, eager to share their opinions and ready to brainstorm new ideas for how to approach the issues. The sessions seemingly enabled those gathered to freely speak their opinions about the future of South Dakota.

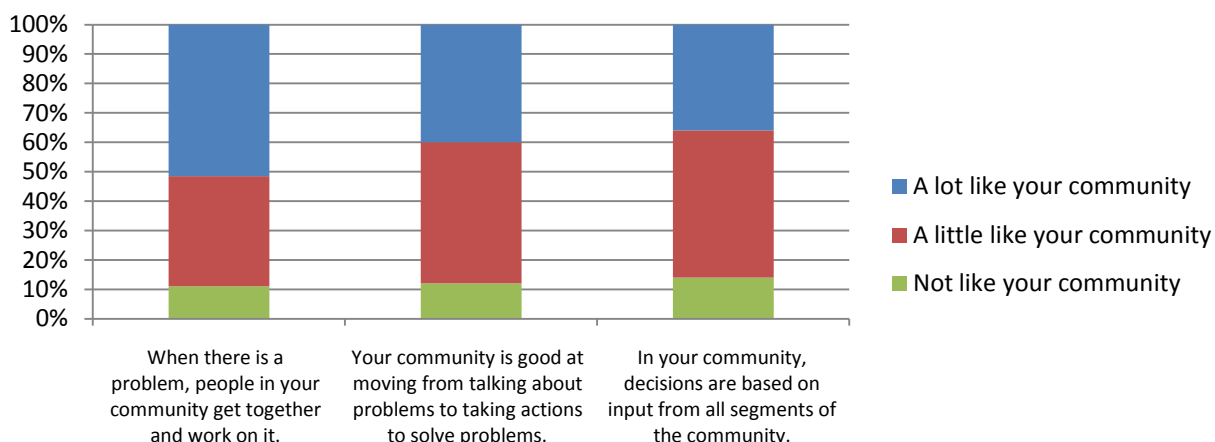
As shown in the chart at right, the meeting participants were confident that they had the ability to move some of the ideas forward. Eighty-nine percent of participants agreed with that statement, with 28 percent strongly agreeing. The concerns that did exist focused on whether there was enough diversity of people and perspectives in the room and whether they had enough support to move forward in developing solutions. In the statewide survey, respondents expressed a similar viewpoint. Eighty-four percent of those polled said they believed they can make a difference in improving the quality of life in their local community.

“Confidence I Can Help Move Some of These Ideas Forward”



A Majority of South Dakotans Believe Their Communities Are Effective at Solving Problems

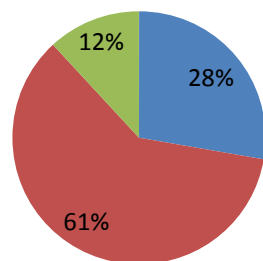
The survey also explored how respondents felt about their community's ability to solve its own problems. When asked if their community is effective at solving problems and improving their quality of life, nearly half (46%) of South Dakotans say this is “a lot like their community.” This is increased from 2009, when 41 percent of South Dakotans said this is “a lot like their community.”



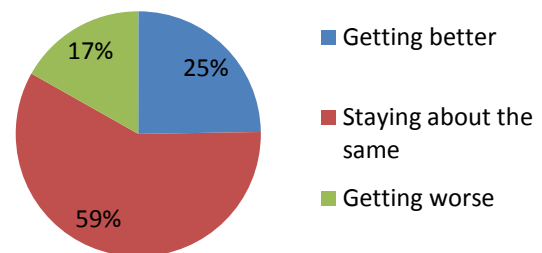
Sixty Percent of South Dakotans Say Quality of Life Is Staying About the Same

About one-quarter of South Dakotans believe that the quality of life is getting better in their state and in their community, and about six out of ten residents feel quality of life is staying about the same. Compared with one year ago, residents' ratings indicate a much more favorable outlook for both their community and their state. Responses did not differ significantly by gender, age, education level, presence of children in the household, and metro vs. non-metro location.

In your community



In your state



Participants Expressed the Need for Joint Planning and for Leaders to Work Together

While the *Prospects & Possibilities* participants and survey respondents expressed optimism in the state's outlook and their community's ability to solve problems, people identified a need for increased planning and vision for changes occurring throughout South Dakota. In particular, people wanted leaders to work together to address the challenges facing the state.

"We need to redefine what 'community' is. In the future, community must be viewed as more regional so that the regional economy can be sustained."¹

Armour Session Participant

"We need better communication between state officials and tribal leaders."

Eagle Butte Session Participant

"The government and citizens are not planning for the future or focusing on the long term. We need to change this."

Reliance Session Participant

¹ Quotes from participants are included throughout this report to provide a sense of the individual contributions and conversations that occurred during the *Prospects & Possibilities* sessions. The quotes are consistent with general themes, but are not intended to represent all participants, all sessions, or even all of the discussions that took place on a particular topic. The quotes should be viewed as opinions of individual citizens. They do not represent the views of the Bush Foundation or the convening organizations. For a broader sampling of participant inputs, refer to the meeting notes from each session, which are available online at CitiZing.org/projects/southdakota.

South Dakotans Are Proud of Their State

Each of the sessions started out by asking participants to share one thing that they love about South Dakota. Three themes consistently emerged across all 35 sessions:

- **Natural Beauty of the Land.** Responses in this category included things like: open spaces; the sky; beautiful sunsets; clean air and water; beautiful landmarks; Black Hills; outdoor recreation; hunting and fishing; all four seasons; diverse landscapes.
- **The People.** This category covered a range of characteristics found in the people of South Dakota, such as: people who are grounded and connected; hard-working people; friendly folks; connection to family roots; strong values; people who have a strong sense of responsibility.
- **Our Community and Way of Life.** A number of people commented on the sense of community and way of life found in South Dakota, including: neighbors who know me; helping each other in times of need; low crime rates; a good, safe place to raise a family; small-town attitude; simplicity of our way of life; camaraderie in rural areas; farming community; low cost of living; being and staying involved.

Following this opening exercise, the participants turned their attention to discussing their top concerns. The pages that follow summarize themes and ideas that emerged from the ensuing discussions.

Concern #1: The Economy

Forty-one percent of session participants voted for the economy as the No. 1 issue facing South Dakota. It was ranked as one of the top two concerns in 24 of the 35 sessions, with many discussions centering on the need to create more living-wage jobs and support business development in rural areas. In the statewide survey, the economy/jobs was also the top concern mentioned by respondents when asked to list their top concerns related to quality of life in South Dakota. Forty-eight percent of respondents listed this as one of their top concerns. This is significantly lower than in 2009 when two-thirds (65%) of residents felt the economy/jobs was the most important issue. When considering challenges about the economy, *Prospects & Possibilities* participants discussed three main issues.

Key Issues Discussed

1. Many businesses and industries are leaving rural areas, resulting in fewer jobs and available services.
2. Across the state, people expressed the need to create more high-paying jobs and diversify industries that fuel the economy, beyond the current emphasis on tourism and agriculture.
3. Many people are moving away from rural areas, and in some cases are leaving the state entirely. The outmigration of young people is of particular concern. Participants noted that the future depends upon attracting more people, especially young people, to the state and getting them to stay.

Businesses and Industries Leaving Rural Areas

Participants are most concerned with businesses and industries leaving rural areas. In discussions about the economy, they mentioned that many small towns are struggling to maintain all of the services they used to provide. Participants emphasized a need to support local economies to prevent the loss of jobs and services.

People also discussed competition from “big box” stores, saying that these retailers often undermine the community by paying minimum wage and not really supporting community needs. In addition, they expressed concern about how state funds are allocated. “Businesses in small towns do affect our economy, yet we focus our money where large numbers of people live,” commented a participant in the Watertown session.

Need to Create Jobs and Diversify South Dakota Industry

Participants in both rural and urban sessions also identified a need to diversify the economy by creating value-added products (both agricultural and non-agricultural), instead of merely focusing on tourism and agriculture. Participants in a number of sessions expressed concern about the overall lack of manufacturing industries and jobs.

“We need to diversify the economy and say ‘yes’ to jobs, investments and development. Progress requires change.”

Rapid City Session Participant

The suggestion to expand into new industries was not universally embraced, however. In the Redfield session, participants were vocal about the need to stop the mindset that they need to be drawing in large manufacturers. While this has been a focus for a number of years, the perception is that manufacturers come in, set up shop and employ 20 to 40 people for a period of time, then when the incentive goes away, so does the manufacturer. Their idea was to focus on what they know – agriculture – and develop businesses revolving around that.

In a discussion related to the need for new industry, participants also expressed concern about the overall employment levels throughout the state. Participants highlighted a lack of job opportunities, even for those with college degrees. The sentiment presented by one participant at the Deadwood session was echoed across the state: “If we don’t attract good paying jobs, the economy will continue to decline.”

Participants said that many of the jobs that *do* exist lack benefits and do not provide a livable wage, so many people must work multiple jobs just to get by. Comments like these were common:

Unemployment is low, but people are underemployed. They’re working multiple jobs at \$8 to \$9 per hour.”

Deadwood Session Participant

“I needed to drop out of school to find work to help support my family.”

Rapid City Session Participant

“Costs are rising, but current salaries are not able to cover the extra expenses.”

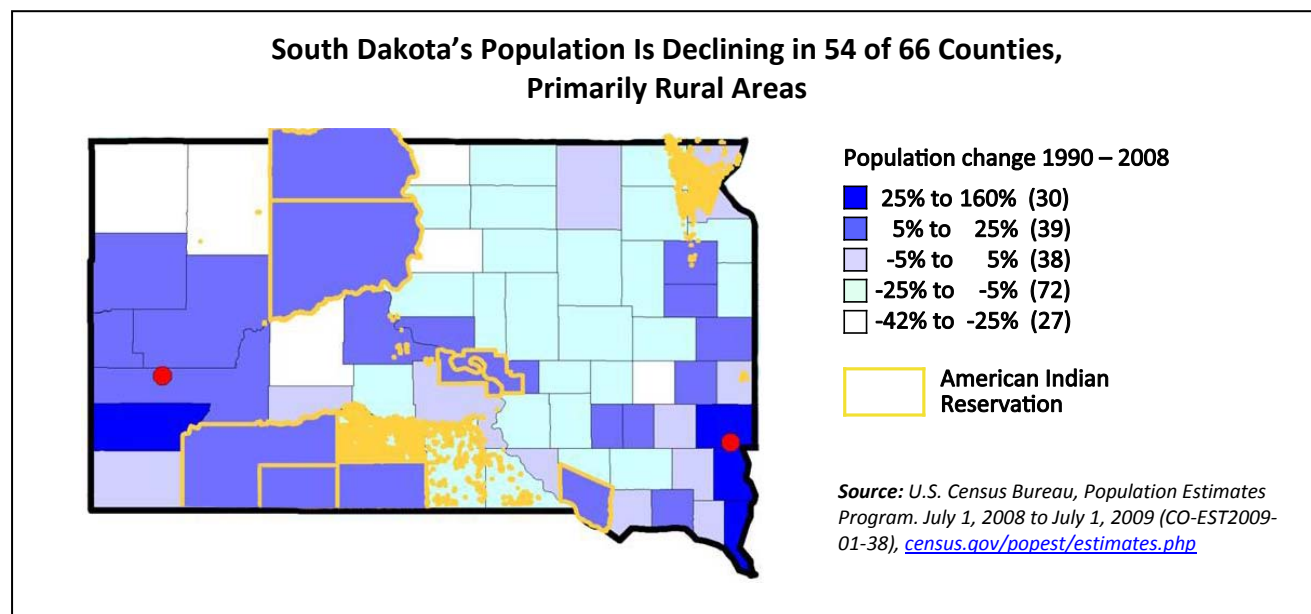
Sisseton Session Participant

“College graduates are working for \$10 an hour.”

Webster Session Participant

People Are Moving Away from Rural Areas

As the chart below shows, South Dakota’s population is declining in 54 of 66 counties. While the population in South Dakota is slowly growing near urban hubs along the I-29 corridor and in areas with recreational services, such as the Black Hills, the rural population continues to decline.



By 2020, it is projected that nearly half of the counties in South Dakota will have fewer than 4,000 residents. Participants, especially those in rural areas, are experiencing *and* are worried about the outflow of people from their communities.

People were concerned about the decreasing population in rural areas. One of the major concerns discussed by participants in this area was the out-migration of young people to urban areas for jobs. Many felt that college-educated people are leaving the state. The term “brain drain” was frequently used to describe the out-migration of the college-educated youth.

**“We are challenged with ‘brain drain’ in South Dakota.
People get higher degrees and then leave.”**

Howard Session Participant

People discussed the increasing elderly population and the strain that would cause in health care. Conversely, participants expressed concern about the increasing population of Native American youth. They worried that, if these youth drop out of high school, it will fuel increased need for social services on reservations.

Proposed Solutions for Economic Issues²

Ideas generated by the participants to address this issue fell into several categories. Highlighted below are some of the ideas generated during the sessions.

Market the State Differently

- Market South Dakota to businesses, including recruiting industries that provide living-wage jobs.
- Market South Dakota jobs to young people to keep them in the state.

Provide Incentives and Tax Breaks

- Provide tax incentives that allow individuals/businesses to take advantage of emerging opportunities.
- Provide financial education, loans and entrepreneurship training for citizens.
- Provide quality housing and benefits as incentives to attract businesses.
- Reconsider relationships among tribal, state and federal governments to create incentives for business opportunities on reservations.
- Ensure that Native Americans have the opportunity to be a part of the tourism industry.
- Create programs that pay off college loans for young people who stay in South Dakota.

Create Programs to Generate New Industries, Jobs and Services

- Look for unique and innovative business opportunities for the future (that are also environmentally sustainable).
- Create an infrastructure for microenterprises through funding, experts and sharing of resources.
- Develop alternative energy industries.
- Invest in science and technology (e.g., wind power, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology and high-tech industries); create technology infrastructure to attract industry.
- Create educational opportunities that address emerging industries, like wind energy.
- Create more research centers (e.g., increase research on using crops as a fuel source).
- Combine smaller farms into cooperatives.
- Create mentoring programs for individuals who are interested in farming.
- Create internship programs that involve youth in small businesses and give them job experience.

Focus on Long-Term Planning and Investments

- Create a rural economic development committee focusing on the creation of rural resources, including surveying businesses about their needs and possibly a business mentoring program.
- Focus on regional planning/government.

² The solutions presented in this report are representative of those proposed and discussed by participants at the *Prospects & Possibilities* sessions. They are not recommendations proposed or endorsed by the Bush Foundation, Wilder Research or the convening organizations.

Concern #2: K-12 Education and Higher Education

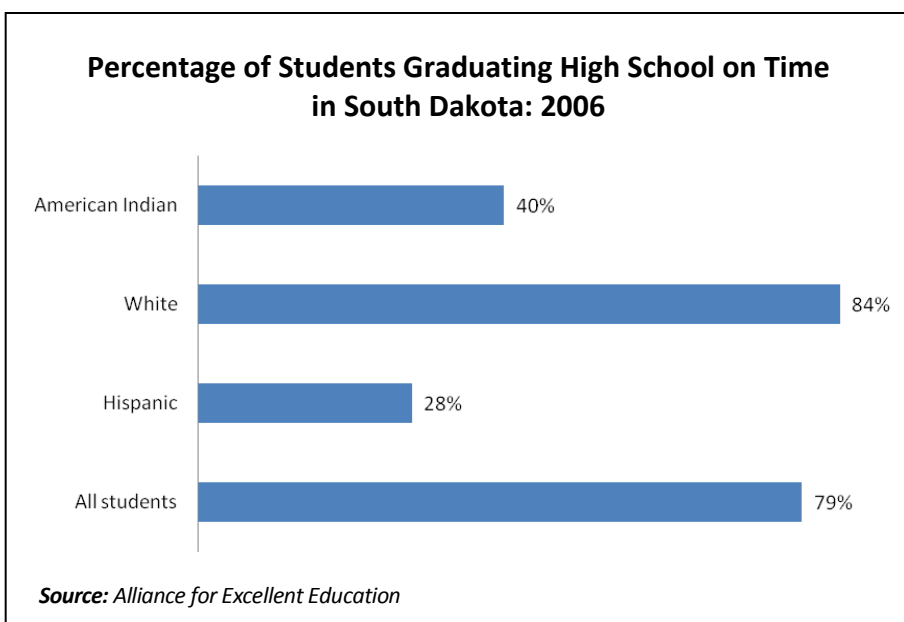
Participants' concerns about education focused on public K-12 education, as well as on the connections between education and other areas, most notably the economy and the future well-being of South Dakota. In the survey, forty-seven percent of respondents mentioned education when asked to list their top three concerns related to quality of life in South Dakota. This percentage is up from 31 percent in 2009. Residents with children were more likely than residents without children to favor increased spending on K-12 and higher education. Younger residents were more likely than older residents to favor increased spending on K-12 education and higher education, as were metro residents compared to rural residents. Three issues were discussed in sessions where education was chosen as one of the state's top concerns.

Key Issues Discussed

1. Graduation rates are low across the state, particularly among Native Americans.
2. Access to and quality of education are lower in rural areas, compounding the long-term challenges for rural communities.
3. Inadequate funding for education limits educational quality and the potential of economic growth. Costs of higher education are too high, creating a significant need for financial assistance for students.

Concerns About Low Graduation Rates and Access to Quality Education

In their discussions, participants express particular concern about the high dropout and low graduation rates statewide, particularly among Native Americans. They see an overall lack of student engagement in their own education, as well as a need for greater parental support. Participants link lack of education to negative outcomes, such as increased crime, gang involvement, and lack of future job and educational opportunities.



They identify many factors wrapped up in providing and accessing high-quality education. There are fewer schools due to declining enrollment in rural areas, a lack of transportation and low-quality education (especially in rural areas and on reservations). A number of participants commented that the rural nature of the state makes it more difficult to recruit and retain quality teachers. In turn, the shortage of quality

teachers affects the overall quality of education. They link this problem to low teacher salaries, particularly in rural areas. According to a 2009 report by the National Education Association, the average teacher salary in South Dakota is the lowest of all 50 U.S. states at \$35,070 per year.

“We are paying our teachers the lowest salaries in the U.S. To keep them, we need to pay them more! They go to Wyoming and get paid \$20,000 more.”

Deadwood Session Participant

Additionally, participants are concerned about how a lack of diverse teachers negatively affects diverse students’ ability to succeed – especially as juniors and seniors, and for English Language Learner students. A related concern was a lack of culturally sensitive teachers on the reservations and in urban areas who can both provide relevant education and assist students in making transitions off the reservation. Many participants were worried about racism and school climate, including stereotypes and bullying, which are seen as serious issues at many schools.

Participants felt that school curricula need to regain a focus on the “basics” of math, reading and writing. In addition, they articulated a need to connect curricula to “real-world” skills and job skills, including creative thinking and problem-solving skills.

Many worry that *No Child Left Behind* has interfered with students’ learning. While some see the potential of technology to enhance learning, they noted that online and distance options aren't always accessible. Many also cited the potentially negative effects of technology on learning. Some participants even felt there was a need to define, again, what a quality education is, particularly in today’s diverse world.

A few participants discussed a need for more early childhood programs because of crucial brain development in children between birth and age five.

Proposed Solutions for Education Issues

Highlighted below are ideas proposed by session participants to address education-related issues.

Review/Increase Education Funding at the State Level

- Dedicate more funds to education at the state level in order to better compensate teachers and better fund education (shift thinking from cost of education to investment in education).
- Provide more scholarships and educate students on how to get funding.
- Communicate more directly among state level, district level and taxpayers to understand how funding works and creatively rethink funding (e.g., private partnerships, tax credit incentives, earned income from rent).
- Invest at the state level in early childhood education programs.
- Provide resources specifically for undocumented immigrant students who face different barriers (e.g., financial aid).
- Reduce costs by sharing teachers and facilities among communities, and by using technology.

Make Teacher Salaries/Benefits More Competitive

- Offer competitive salaries and benefits for teachers, as well as providing other incentives in the community.
- Offer opportunities for new teachers (like Dakota Corps Scholarship where tuition is reimbursed for staying and working in-state) or programs for older experienced teachers.

Invest in New Ways to Make Education Relevant

- Partner with trade schools and universities to promote education that prepares students for innovative jobs in technology.
- Implement summer "Learn and Serve" experiences where students are supervised and paid for both working and learning.
- Use curricula focusing on real-world skills, including problem-solving, entrepreneurship and creativity, and addressing the basics (reading, writing and math).
- Recruit racially diverse teachers, as well as providing trainings for existing teachers on cultural sensitivity.
- Use technology to facilitate distance learning in rural areas and for nontraditional learners.
- Emphasize programs that attract students back to the community after college.

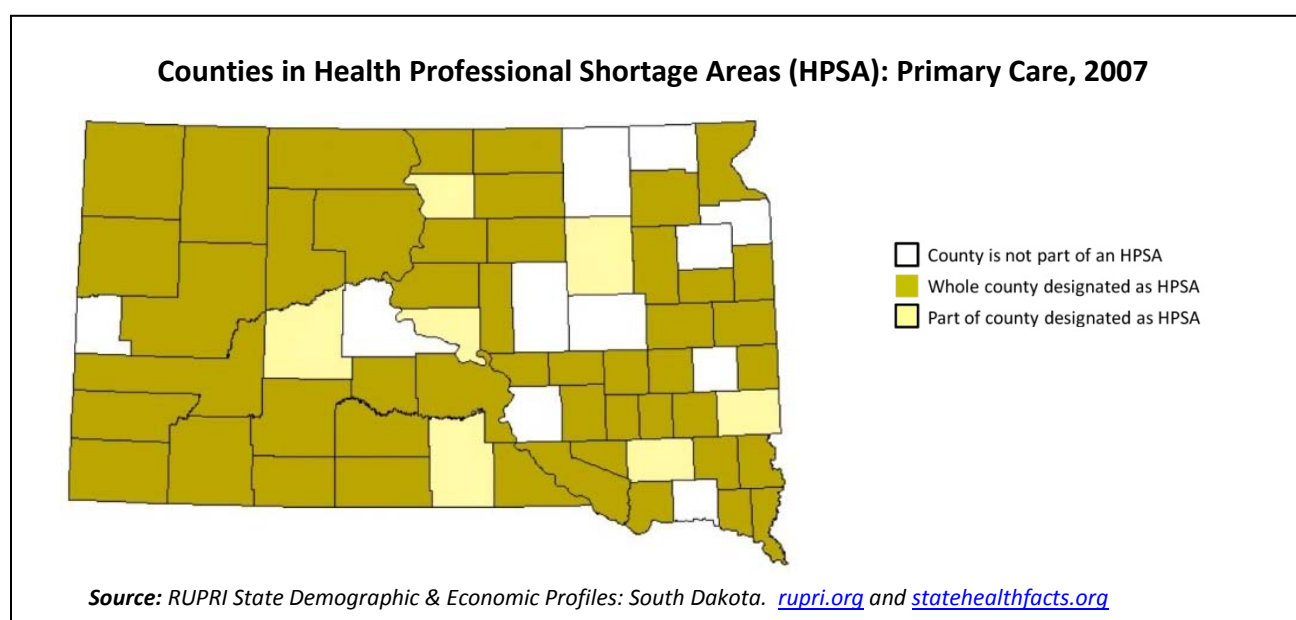
Find Innovative Ways to Involve Families and Communities in Improving Education

- Conduct a media, community or government campaign about the benefits of staying in school.
- Use community-building to engage parents and students. Create accountability for parents to be engaged in boards and school events. Use technology to communicate with parents.
- Consider more meaningful ways to evaluate teachers, and create more robust relationships between teachers and families.
- Offer structured, culturally appropriate afterschool programs to build community (among parents, students, teachers, community members, including for reservation schools); for example, cultural counselors, and more programs like Native Reads and Native Youth Club.
- Invest in community education about parenting, postsecondary options and funding, and other resources (especially on reservations) to accommodate working parents' schedules.

Concern #3: Access to and Cost of Quality Health Care

Access to primary care physicians and mental health professionals is a key challenge in South Dakota. In 2007, of the 66 counties in South Dakota, only eleven counties had adequate primary care health professional coverage and only three counties had adequate mental health professional coverage (see pages 45 – 47 for more data on health care in South Dakota). In the statewide survey, 34 percent of respondents identified health care as one of the top three issues impacting quality of life in South Dakota. This compares to 24 percent in 2009.

When discussing health care, people realize that many lack coverage, including the working poor and students. People expressed concerns about the number of jobs that don't offer access to health insurance. Participants also discussed low-quality health care in rural areas, as well as limited access to emergency medical services and prenatal care, and the need to travel long distances to access certain routine procedures. They also expressed concern about low-quality health care on reservations. Finally, people also are worried that the aging population will need more health care services as they increase as a proportion of the population.



At the same time, participants discussed the overall high cost of health care driven, in part, by unnecessary procedures and tests, as well as fraudulent insurance claims and excessive paperwork.

“Health care is a tough issue. [My small business] can’t provide health insurance for our employees because of the expense, and it’s even tough to pay for myself.”

Ft. Sisseton Session Participant

Some participants in the health care discussions expressed a need for specialized training in ultrasound, radiology and other technical health care jobs in the state. Others believed there needs to be a plan for long-term care. Some people expressed an overall lack of understanding of the new federal health care bill and its implications for their communities.

Participants also felt that health care is extremely important and connected to many other issues. They particularly identified a lack of access to health care in rural areas. The participants also discussed limited emergency care (including a lack of ambulances), lack of providers (including general practitioners) and difficulty in retaining staff and maintaining facilities. This lack of local services forces people to travel when they need to receive specialized treatments. Participants also acknowledged that access to health care is a more serious problem on Indian reservations in the state.

Proposed Solutions for Health Care Issues

Meeting participants suggested a wide range of solutions to address health care-related issues.

Devise New Options for Health Care Coverage

- Consider universal health care options.
- Require more transparency in health care costs.
- Create incentives for healthy lifestyle choices and support local fitness options (like premium reductions for documented prevention behaviors).
- Offer wellness credits for those who maintain positive health habits.

Explore Innovative Ways to Attract and Retain Doctors

- Create incentives to attract doctors, particularly doctors originally from South Dakota, and get them to stay (e.g., housing benefits and job opportunities for spouses).
- Allow tuition forgiveness for health professionals who stay in state/rural areas.
- Improve quality of health care facilities as workplaces.

Consider New Options for Health Care Delivery

- Use telemedicine or "e-medicine" to serve rural areas.
- Educate the public on prevention of health problems and diseases.
- Create more assisted-living facilities for aging population.
- Share specialized services among communities.

Concern #4: Race Relations

Participants in a number of sessions discussed racism as a pervasive problem in South Dakota, causing barriers to educational and job opportunities. In groups that chose racism as one of the top issues, participants said that the overall lack of racial diversity hurts the ability of students of color to perform well, and that education and social services often aren't culturally appropriate. Some participants cited increased barriers for undocumented immigrant students and families in terms of language, financial aid and access to resources. Participants also mentioned racial profiling as an issue in some areas.

“People need to learn about *real* Native Americans, not from story books or TV. We need to build trust.”

Mission Session Participant

There was general consensus across sessions that many of the issues—from health care, to education, social services and employment—are more serious challenges on reservations. Poverty is a key problem, characterized by some as cyclical, and the increased need for social services, health care, and fewer opportunities on the reservations make issues more complex.

People in these discussions saw racism as a behavior learned at home, in the school and in the community, and expressed a need to break the cycle of racism. They emphasized that racism, prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination are common problems in schools, affecting students' abilities to succeed.

“When you are little, you do not realize that people are different. You are taught stereotypes growing up. We need to break the vicious cycle. We need to be the voice in our community and say to our generation, ‘We have a choice not to be racist.’”

Rapid City Session Participant

Additionally, some participants discussed challenges caused by a lack of understanding among whites about how tribal government works or how government funding of Native nations operates.

Proposed Solutions to Improve Race Relations

- Address issues of culture and race in classes, both at the community and school level, to disrupt stereotypes and discrimination.
- Sponsor training for elected officials about cultural sensitivity and Native American cultures.
- Create opportunities for dialogue among communities to address racism, prison issues, and problems on reservations; white people need to be involved.
- Promote more stories like the *Argus Leader's* series “Growing Up Indian” (argusleader.com/section/gui).

Other Themes that Emerged

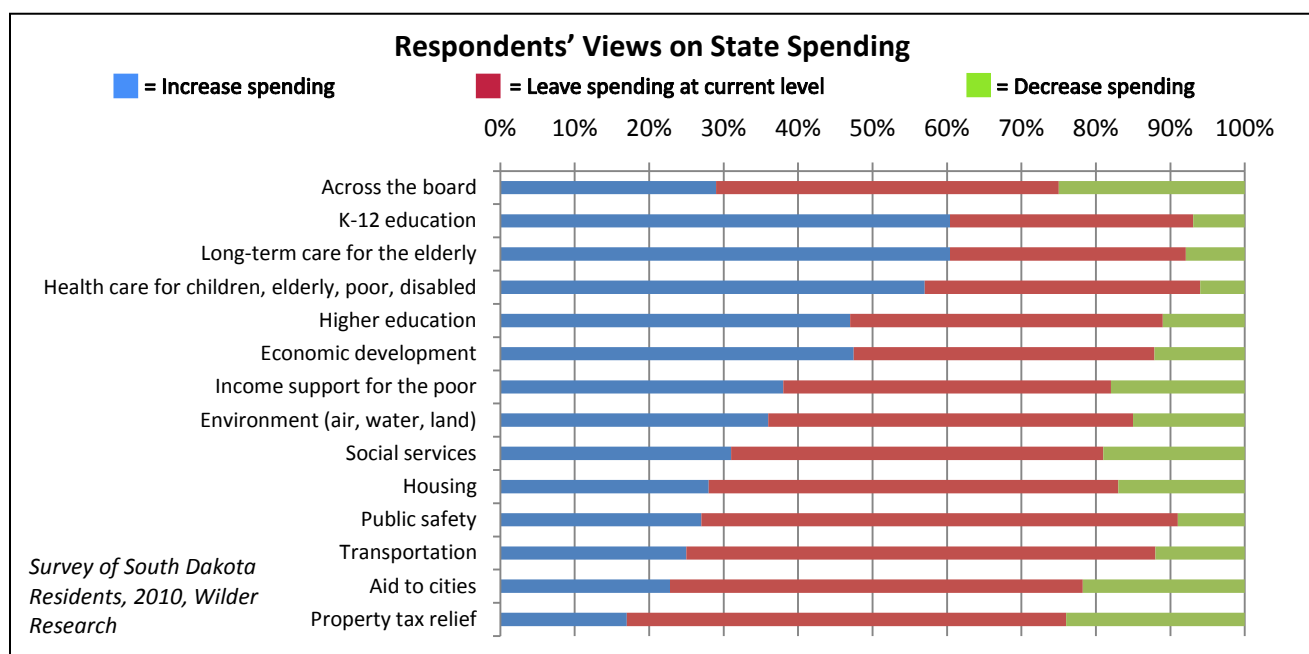
The process used in the sessions allowed participants to identify many different areas of concern. Highlighted below are themes that emerged as important underlying elements to other concerns.

State Government, Budget and Taxes

In the sessions, state government was a common topic of conversation. People expressed concerns about a declining tax base in the state with demographic change, particularly in rural areas. In the statewide survey, 30 percent of respondents mentioned government budgets/spending/taxes as one of the top concerns affecting quality of life in South Dakota.

Participants in the *Prospects & Possibilities* sessions made comments about the government having a lack of vision for the future and identified a need for government to address the challenges small towns face. In some conversations, participants felt that the government has not planned appropriately for future changes, including demographic realities or infrastructure. They also cited a concentration of political power in urban areas and were concerned about what this would mean for rural communities. In addition, participants in some sessions said that state and tribal governments should focus on building a better relationship with each other.

Participants also expressed concerns about government spending, believing it is important to not overspend. This concern was validated by the statewide survey. Respondents were asked to select from a list of pre-determined options how they feel about their state's budget challenges. Half of South Dakotans (49%) said the state's budget challenges have reached a crisis and will require difficult decisions to solve. This compares to 31 percent of residents who gave this answer in 2009. In addition, nearly one-quarter of residents (23%) said that the state's budget challenges are real but can be solved easily. This compares to 34 percent of residents who gave this answer in 2009. Residents with children were more likely than residents without children to give this response. Residents with higher education were more likely than residents who were less educated to give this response. When asked about government spending, 71 percent of respondents said that spending should either be decreased or remain at the current level, as shown in the chart below.

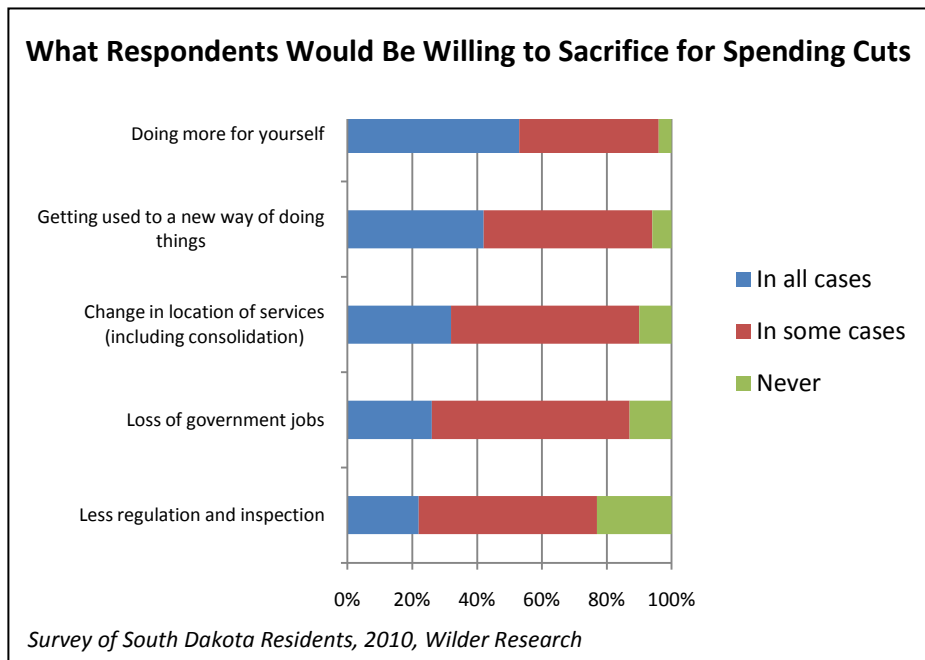


South Dakotans were most likely to favor increases in spending in the areas of K-12 education; long-term care for the elderly; health care for children, the elderly, poor and disabled; higher education; and economic development. They were least likely to favor increases in spending for transportation, aid to cities and property tax relief.

- Women were more likely than men to favor increased spending in the areas of social services, public safety and aid to cities.
- Less-educated residents were more likely than residents with higher education to favor increased spending on health care for children, the elderly, poor and disabled; income support for the poor; property tax relief; public safety; housing; aid to cities; the environment; transportation; and across the board.
- Younger residents were more likely than older residents to favor increased spending on K-12 education; higher education; health care for children, the elderly, poor, and disabled; housing; aid to cities; the environment; and across the board. On the other hand, younger residents were more likely than older residents to favor decreased spending on income support for the poor. Residents under the age of 34 in particular were likely to favor decreased spending on long-term care for the elderly and property tax relief.
- Residents of metro areas were more likely than residents of non-metro areas to favor increased spending on education and health care.

Respondents were also asked to select two of the items from the same list of government services that they felt were most in need of change to ensure taxpayers get the most cost-effective services. The areas in which residents said spending should be increased were many of the same areas in which residents were most likely to feel reform is needed to ensure efficient services.

- Women were more likely to believe that health care, long-term care, income support for the poor, social services, and environment are in need of change, whereas men were more likely to believe that higher education, housing, aid to cities and public safety are in need of change.
- Residents with children were far less likely than residents without children to believe change is needed in the area of K-12 education to ensure cost-effective services. Residents without children were also more likely than residents with children to feel change is needed in the areas of health care, long-term care, property tax relief, social services, economic development, housing, transportation and the environment.
- Residents with higher education were more likely than those who are less educated to feel change is needed to ensure cost-effective services in the areas of K-12 education, health care, social services, economic development and aid to cities. Less-educated people were more likely to feel change is needed in the areas of long-term care, income support for the poor and property tax relief.
- Younger residents were more likely than older residents to feel change is needed to ensure cost-effective services in all areas of government, with the exception of long-term care and economic development – older residents were more likely to feel change is needed in these areas.



The survey also explored what citizens would be willing to sacrifice for spending cuts. South Dakotans were most likely to be able to accept doing more for themselves and getting used to a new way of doing things. They are least willing to accept less convenience, such as longer waiting or traveling times, as well as less regulation and inspection.

Respondents were also informed that increasing taxes is one possible option under consideration to resolve their state’s budget challenges. They were then asked if they would be willing to pay higher taxes under a variety of different circumstances. A majority of South Dakotans agree or strongly agree they would be willing to pay higher taxes in many different circumstances. On the other hand, nearly four out of ten residents (38%) said they do not support raising taxes under any circumstances.

The Need for Joint Planning

Across all themes – reflected in the proposed solutions coming out of the *Prospects & Possibilities* sessions – people identified a need for increased planning and vision for changes occurring throughout South Dakota.

“We need to develop a consortium of South Dakotans who represent the entire state to brainstorm creative economic ideas for the state.”

Mitchell Session Participant

When asked what one piece of advice they would give to elected officials in their state as they work on these and other issues of importance to their state, by far the most common suggestions provided by the residents of South Dakota fall under the following themes:

- Listen to your constituents, represent the people that elected you, remember who you work for (20% of respondents).
- Use common sense, do what is best for the people, make tough decisions, don’t pander to lobbyists (14% of respondents).
- Exercise fiscal responsibility, balance the budget, don’t waste money (13% of respondents).

Local and state representatives attended nearly all sessions, which citizens appreciated. Most officials stated up front that they were just there to listen and expressed appreciation at the end of the sessions at being able to hear the participants’ perspectives. Several officials said that they

don't often get to participate in these types of sessions where citizens' opinions and ideas are solicited in a non-partisan setting.

Staff members from USDA Rural Development also closely followed the conversation. Representatives attended both the Aberdeen and Redfield sessions. In fact, one representative came to two sessions because she was so inspired by the first discussion.

"We need to contact our legislators, generate ideas and share these ideas with others. We need to repeat the themes and discussion from today's meeting."

Rapid City Session Participant

Importance of Courageous Leadership

In addition to its focus on building capacity within communities to solve tough problems, the Bush Foundation also focuses on building courageous leadership capacity.

Courageous leaders don't shy away from conflict when they are trying to solve tough problems. Courageous leaders harness energy from differing points of view and rally community members to work together to find solutions. Courageous leadership can come from anybody in your community, not just those in charge.

Bush Foundation Definition of Courageous Leadership

Survey respondents were read the description above when asked about the courageous leadership in their community. When asked if their community has the courageous leadership it needs to solve tough problems, 41 percent of residents said this is “a lot like their community” and 47 percent said it is “a little like their community.” Women, residents with higher education and residents age 65 and older were most likely to strongly endorse this statement about their community.

Six out of ten residents (60%) said their community is either strong or very strong in terms of courageous leadership, compared with 47 percent in 2009. Residents with children are more than twice as likely as residents without children to say their community is very strong in terms of courageous leadership. Older residents are more likely than younger residents to say their community is strong or very strong in terms of courageous leadership.

Upswing in Leadership and Moving from Talk to Action

Based on the survey of residents, there was an upswing in South Dakotans' perception of leadership and the ability of leadership to move from talk to action. These findings are highlighted in the chart below.

My community...	Percentage reporting “a lot like their community”	
	2009	2010
Is strong regarding courageous leaders	47%	60%
Moves from talk to action	32%	40%
Gets together to work on problems	62%	51%
Decides based on input from all segments	39%	36%

Survey of South Dakota Residents, 2009 – 2010, Wilder Research

There was also a correlation between those who reported problems being solved “a lot” in their communities and their perception of the strength of courageous leadership in their community. This data reinforces the Bush Foundation's belief that the recipe for a community to solve tough problems begins with courageous leadership.

Courageous Leadership Is Important to Solving Tough Problems

My community...	Those who report problems being solved “a lot” also report community ...		Those who report problems being solved “not at all” also report community ...	
	2009	2010	2009	2010
Is strong regarding courageous leaders	68%	85%	2%	5%
Moves from talk to action	57%	77%	4%	6%
Gets together to work on problems	80%	74%	19%	3%
Decides based on input from all segments	58%	50%	2%	1%

Survey of South Dakota Residents, 2009 – 2010, Wilder Research

Observations from the Conversations

Conveners and session organizers had the following observations from the *Prospects & Possibilities* conversations.

1. **Session participants universally expressed appreciation at being asked for their opinions and ideas.** They appreciated the opportunity to be heard, as well as being involved in the identification of possible solutions. The Bush Foundation and partner organizations want to help this fact be well-known to policymakers who are considering how to engage courageous leadership to solve tough problems.

In many sessions, participants said they wished they had more time to discuss the issues and brainstorm ideas. There was an overwhelming sentiment that even after three hours of discussion, they had just scratched the surface. Participants are eager for the conversation to continue. They thought the sessions would be even more successful if follow-up sessions were held. In addition, some session participants reflected on how they might use this kind of process to work on very intense, conflicting issues, like school consolidation, to move difficult conversations forward. Overall, people said they would be willing to spend time to understand issues, prioritize and take action.

2. **Rural residents are acutely aware of the demographic and economic shifts already underway in their communities** – specifically the effects of the aging population and the exodus of young people. They may be more inspired to act now than those in urban areas, where population density may hide the underlying demographic changes.
3. **Many participants expressed that planning was needed in their state to address problems and opportunities, manage change and move toward solutions.** This is an indication of the ripeness for action.

There was a sense, however, that the action items still seem very nebulous. Participants were concerned that nothing would come of their input. For these sessions to have lasting impact, it will be important to define next steps in partnership with local and state organizations and with government leaders.

Next Steps

The next steps in the *Prospects & Possibilities* initiative depend upon your ideas for follow-up after you've read the report. We have ideas but we also welcome your input, either for things we should do or about things you plan to do. Read on for more details, or begin sending us your feedback now at Facebook.com/ProspectsSD.

When we started this project last fall with partner organizations and participants from across the state, it was with a fundamental belief that historic demographic and economic shifts across our country and the region are creating tremendous challenges and opportunities. We also believe that community members understand better than anyone the reality of these trends facing their communities and the state. They are best positioned to make decisions about what path to follow.

Almost universally, participants at the *Prospects & Possibilities* sessions were pleased to participate. They were glad that someone was asking them to share their opinions and that they had a chance to brainstorm new ideas for how to approach the issues. They were confident they had the ability to move some of the ideas forward.

To honor this confidence and self-determination, we suggest that **the report findings can be a catalyst for the forward motion** and that by sharing your reactions, **you will help shape the next steps**.

While many of the meeting participants expressed an interest in continuing the discussion and taking action in their communities, they agreed that more people need to get involved. They also thought that the state's elected and appointed leaders would benefit from tapping into the ideas of people across the state. The Bush Foundation has already shared the findings with many state and local leaders, and we are distributing this report to all legislators and key appointed officials. We encourage you to share the report as well. Yet while we hope this will make a difference, the *Prospects & Possibilities* report is not intended simply to be the end of the process. It's also the start of what we hope will be an ongoing dialogue about and game plan for local, regional and state actions to strengthen the community capacity and courageous leadership needed for these transformative times.

We have some next step ideas in mind: face-to-face follow-up gatherings, increasing awareness of and connections to existing resources and expertise, and design labs and community pilots to dig into more depth on issues and solutions raised, as examples. Before we take any next steps ourselves, we want to hear your feedback and suggestions; but that shouldn't stop you from moving forward with your own next steps, and we encourage you to do so.

Some Guiding Questions for Dialogue

- What are your reactions to the report? What did it miss? What did it hit? (This report is a statewide report. If you want to see the individual community conversation reports go to CitiZing.org/projects/southdakota.)

- As you read the report, does anything pop to mind about how you might use this information in your own community or organization? What ideas does it inspire, if any? Are there misconceptions or falsehoods that should be corrected (the report was based both on the recorded comments of community members who participated in the *Prospects & Possibilities* sessions and on data collected from state and federal sources)?
- Do you know if people or organizations are already working on the challenges, opportunities and concerns noted in the report? Who are they? How can people connect with them?
- What needs to happen or is happening already in your community to address concerns raised or to take advantage of opportunities noted?

Share Your Feedback with the Foundation about *Prospects & Possibilities*

- **Take the feedback survey** at svy.mk/prospectsandpossibilities.
- **Send an email** to info@bushfoundation.org or write: Prospects & Possibilities, Bush Foundation, 332 Minnesota Street, Suite E900, St. Paul, MN 55101

Keep the *Prospects & Possibilities* Conversation Going

- **Continue the discussion on Facebook** by encouraging people to read the report and join in the discussion at Facebook.com/ProspectsSD.
- **Start a conversation** about the report findings using the guiding questions starting on page 25. Talk with your family members, friends, neighbors and colleagues. Share it with your church group, service clubs, youth groups, chamber of commerce and others.
- **Share resources and names of organizations** that are already working on the concerns and ideas raised in the report. Help make those resources be more widely known locally and send a short description and contact information to us at info@bushfoundation.org so we can help highlight their existence and connect people with them statewide.
- **Share your stories.** Write a brief description about how you, your community or organizations are tackling problems and taking advantage of opportunities, and share that with us at info@bushfoundation.org so we can help you share it across the state and region. These stories can help educate and inspire others to take action as well.
- **Promote the findings** in your local newspaper, or post a link to the report from your Facebook page, website, blog and other social and traditional media and encourage discussion back and forth.
- **Host a community meeting** and invite one of the convening organizations to facilitate a process like the original *Prospects & Possibilities* sessions so more people can participate in the process.
- **Share the report with your representatives in the legislature** and discuss your thoughts with them. You can find their contact information in the Current Legislators section of the South Dakota Legislature website: legis.state.sd.us/sessions/2011/MemberMenu.aspx.

We'll be compiling the responses over the next few weeks and formulating more follow-up actions based on your input. As we do, we'll consider those next steps in the context of these key principles around which the *Prospects & Possibilities* work centers:

- **Fostering a shared understanding of the evidence** that represents the conditions, issues and opportunities that exist (e.g., the data and trends information shared and conversations occurring at the original *Prospects & Possibilities* sessions and through this report).
- **Building an awareness of and perspective on what other communities are doing** to stay vital – both the successes and failures from which we can all learn, and what might be replicated.
- **Building stronger connections to people within communities** to support courageous leadership and increase community vitality in the face of decline or growth.
- **Encouraging citizens to better know the skills and attributes they bring to bear** on the tough problems their communities face and to connect with other helpful people and resources to solve those problems and make full use of opportunities.

Thank you for reading this report and for taking the next steps toward community solutions!

Appendix

Demographic Summary

The information in this report focuses on the 35 convening sessions conducted in South Dakota during the last quarter of 2010, with participation of 956 people, and on the South Dakotans who were randomly surveyed in December 2010. The information below paints a picture of all these people, summarizing key demographic information about the 720+ participants who completed at least some portion of the survey during the *Prospects & Possibilities* sessions, and the approximately 400 residents who participated in the statewide survey.

South Dakota households were randomly selected to participate in the survey using address-based sampling, and adults were chosen at random from these households using the “most recent birthday” method. Post-stratification weighting based on age and gender (from the 2010 U.S. Census) was used to ensure representativeness of the data. The sampling error of the survey data is less than +/- 5 percent.

Overall, *Prospects & Possibilities* meeting participants were a group of people very committed to the state. Forty-eight percent of them had lived in the state for more than 35 years. (Only 5.6% had lived there less than five years; 26.7% five to 20 years; 20% 21-35 years.) Forty-eight percent were over 50 years old.

Table 1: Age Distribution

<i>Prospects & Possibilities Participants</i>			<i>Survey Participants</i>	
Age	Number	Percentage	Age	Percentage
<18	76	10.6%	<18	0%
18-35	146	20.3%	18-34	31%
36-50	150	20.8%	35-49	25%
51-65	243	33.8%	50-64	25%
65+	105	14.6%	65+	19%

Women were in the majority (58%) of those who participated in the *Prospects & Possibilities* meetings. Participants in the statewide survey were equally male (50%) and female (50%). While people from all income strata were represented, 37 percent had individual incomes between \$35,000 and \$75,000. Another 23 percent had individual incomes over \$75,000. Table 2 shows the educational distribution of the participants in the South Dakota conversations and survey.

Table 2: Educational Background

<i>Prospects & Possibilities Participants</i>			<i>Survey Participants</i>	
Education	Number	Percentage	Education	Percentage
Less than High School	86	11.7%	High School Diploma or Less	30%
High School Diploma	69	9.4%	Some College/AA Degree	33%
Training after High School	35	4.8%		
Some College	112	15.2%	Bachelor's Degree or More	37%
College Graduate	189	25.7%		
Some Graduate School	58	7.9%		
Graduate Degree	186	25.3%		

The vast majority of participants in the *Prospects & Possibilities* discussions were white. The racial and ethnic percentages are fairly consistent with the diversity of the population across South Dakota.

Table 3: Racial & Ethnic Identity
Prospects & Possibilities Participants

Race	Number	Percentage
Native	43	5.7%
White	647	85.4%
Black	8	1.1%
Latino	31	4.1%
Asian	6	0.8%
African	1	0.1%
Multiracial	16	2.1%
Other	6	0.8%

Other demographic descriptors of the participants included place of residence and employment.

Table 4: Place of Residence
Prospects & Possibilities Participants

Which best describes where you live?	Number	Percentage
Farm or Ranch	88	12.4%
In Country (Not on Farm or Ranch)	70	9.9%
Town under 1,000	60	8.5%
Town 1,000 to 10,000	195	27.5%
Town 10,000 to 50,000	45	6.3%
Town or City over 50,000	252	35.5%

Table 5: Employment
Prospects & Possibilities Participants

Which best describes my employment?	Number	Percentages
At Home	30	4.1%
Full Time	424	58.1%
Part Time	107	14.7%
Student	86	11.8%
Unemployed	20	2.7%
Retired	63	8.6%

Quantitative Data on Top Concerns

Meeting participants were asked to vote on which of nine pre-identified issues they thought was the biggest concern or problem to solve. The top nine issues were identified during a telephone poll of South Dakota residents in 2009, which was commissioned by the Bush Foundation and conducted by Wilder Research.

Table 6

First asked, "Which of these is the state's biggest concern or problem to solve?"		
Economy	289	41.3%
Education	170	24.3%
Health Care	85	12.2%
Race Relations	51	7.3%
Social Services	32	4.6%
Government	22	3.1%
Environment	21	3.0%
Crime & Safety	18	2.6%
Transportation	11	1.6%

Table 7

After presentation of data and group discussion asked again, "Which of these is the state's biggest concern or problem to solve?"		
Economy	259	41.3%
Education	170	27.1%
Health Care	89	14.2%
Social Services	29	4.6%
Race Relations	23	3.7%
Transportation	23	3.7%
Government	18	2.9%
Environment	10	1.6%
Crime & Safety	6	1.0%

Statewide Survey of Residents

Below are the results to the question posed to respondents: List your top three concerns related to quality of life in South Dakota. As shown below, the most commonly mentioned issues were: the economy/jobs, education, health care and government budgets/spending. This is significantly different than in 2009 when two-thirds (65%) of residents felt the economy/jobs was the most important issue, followed by education (31%) and health care (24%).

Table 8

List your top three concerns related to quality of life in South Dakota	
Economy/Jobs	48%
Education	47%
Health Care	34%
Government/Spending/Taxes	26%

Top Concerns by Geography – Urban versus Rural

The following analysis looks at top concerns in South Dakota by where they lived as identified by the *Prospects and Possibilities* project. Using the Turning Point™ survey variable “Where I live,” the categories “rural,” “small town” and “urban” were used for analyses in both states.³ These results are based on participants’ responses to the question, “Which of these is the state’s biggest concern or problem to solve” after the Wilder presentation. Any participants who did not respond to both questions were not included. The following table summarizes this information.

Table 9

	Rural	%	Small Town	%	Urban	%
Education	88	24%	13	30%	60	35%
Economy	178	48%	10	23%	55	32%
Health Care	55	15%	7	16%	22	13%
Social Services	5	1%	5	12%	14	8%
Race Relations	7	2%	1	2%	14	8%
Transportation	19	5%	0	-	0	-
Environment	3	1%	7	16%	0	-
Government	13	4%	0	-	4	2%
Crime & Safety	3	1%	0	-	2	1%
Total	371	100%	43	100%	171	100%

As shown above, the top two concerns among participants in South Dakota is the economy and education. However, how these are ranked depends on where they lived. More urban and small town participants⁴ rank education as their top concern with 35 percent and 30 percent of participants, respectively; rural participants are more concerned about the economy, with 48 percent choosing that category as their top concern. For small town and urban participants, 23 percent and 32 percent, respectively, voted for the economy as a top concern; and 24 percent of rural participants selected education as their top concern.

Health care is a concern across areas: 15 percent of rural, 16 percent of small town and 13 percent of urban participants voted for this concern. More urban and small town participants are concerned about social services (8% and 12%, respectively) versus only 1 percent of rural participants. Additionally, race relations is a stronger concern in urban areas and the environment is a larger concern among small town participants. Transportation received no votes in small town and urban areas, although 5 percent of rural voters identify it as their top concern. Government attracted 4 percent of the vote in rural areas, 0 percent in small towns, and only 2 percent of urban voters. Finally, crime and safety is considered a top concern by only 1 percent of rural and urban participants, and by 0 small town participants.

³ These categories were created from the Turning Point™ survey categories: “rural” is a composite of the categories “farm or ranch,” “not on a farm or ranch, but in the country,” “town under 1000,” and “town 1,000-10,000,” “small town” was created from “town 10,000-50,000”; and “urban” from “town or city 50,000+.” As a result, the category “rural” tends to be slightly larger than “small town” or “urban”.

⁴ Note that the category “small town” only reflects 43 participants.

Evaluation Questions

At the end of each *Prospects & Possibilities* session, facilitators asked the participants four questions. The table below summarizes the percentage of participants who reported that they “strongly” or “somewhat agreed” with the statement.

I am more aware of (the state’s) needs and challenges.	92%
I have confidence that I can help move some of these ideas forward.	89%
The discussion provided a safe space to participate and share opinions.	97%
The discussion represented a good cross-section of people.	73%

Partner Organizations

The Bush Foundation chose to work with the following four South Dakota organizations, which invited participants and facilitated the conversations. These organizations were selected for their experience in mobilizing and engaging communities and their ability to work across many sectors. South Dakota Cooperative Extension Service (SDCES) at South Dakota State University was chosen for its capacity to organize and conduct a large number of the sessions and because of its recent work with the St. Paul, MN-based Northwest Area Foundation in the implementation of statewide leadership capacity building. The other convening organizations were then able to work from their strengths in certain geographic regions or with specific populations. The convener organizations were also selected because they are generally seen as “neutral” on issues—some specifically work in helping communities resolve conflict and set priorities.

- **Northeast South Dakota Community Action Program (NESDCAP) and Northeast South Dakota Economic Corporation (NESDEC)** help promote community excellence and stimulate economic growth through loans, technical assistance and partnerships. They are also the home for GROW South Dakota, which promotes and fosters economic development in distressed communities and underserved markets in South Dakota. nesdcap.org



- **South Dakota Cooperative Extension Service (SDCES)** provides practical learning resources to address complex problems of youth and families, communities, agriculture, business and industry. SDCES is part of a nationwide educational network through South Dakota State University and the United States Department of Agriculture. Trained professional staff (Extension educators and specialists), along with trained volunteers, teach the state’s diverse population to make informed choices and decisions affecting their lives, communities, farm/ranch operations, environment and businesses. sdstate.edu/sdces/index.cfm



South Dakota
Cooperative Extension Service

- **Sioux Falls Area Community Foundation (SFACF)** is a publicly supported foundation serving Minnehaha, Lincoln, McCook and Turner counties, and communities within a 25-mile radius of Sioux Falls. SFACF unites donors, organizations and interests around a common goal: building permanent charitable endowments and using the proceeds to strengthen local communities. sfacf.org



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- **John T. Vucurevich Foundation** is a private foundation that seeks to facilitate solutions by providing grants for the arts, education, health and human services, housing and transportation in South Dakota with a preference for western South Dakota and the Black Hills area. jtvf.org



JOHN T. VUCUREVICH
FOUNDATION

...to make a piece of the world a brighter place.

Participant Recruitment Methods

Partner organizations chose their own recruitment methods, working from existing relationships in communities. Some used broad invitations through mass mailings. Others took a targeted approach, working through economic developers, community organizations and clients. Session facilitators reiterated at each session that individuals should participate as a community member, as opposed to advocating for their organization. Conveners also encouraged participants to take a statewide view, rather than focusing on regional or community self-interest.

Complete Listing of South Dakota *Prospects & Possibilities* Sessions

Listed below are all of the sessions held across South Dakota. The location numbers correspond to the numbered points on the map on page 4. See page 33 for a description of the convening partner organizations.

Location #	City/Town	Date	Time	Convening Partner
1	Aberdeen	Oct. 13	5:30 p.m.	NESDCAP
2	Armour	Dec. 8	6:00 p.m.	SDCES
3	Brookings	Nov. 10	6:00 p.m.	SDCES
4	Deadwood	Nov. 5	11:00 a.m.	JTVF
5	Eagle Butte	Nov. 30	5:30 p.m.	SDCES
6	Ft. Sisseton	Sept. 30	10:30 a.m.	NESDCAP
7	Gettysburg	Dec. 8	5:30 p.m.	SDCES
8	Gregory	Nov. 30	5:30 p.m.	SDCES
9	Highmore	Nov. 8	6:00 p.m.	SDCES
10	Hot Springs	Nov. 10	5:30 p.m.	SDCES
11	Howard	Nov. 17	11:30 a.m.	SDCES
12	Huron	Nov. 9	6:00 p.m.	SDCES
13	Kimball	Dec. 6	6:00 p.m.	SDCES
14	Martin	Nov. 18	5:30 p.m.	SDCES
15	Milbank	Nov. 16	11:00 a.m.	NESDCAP
16	Mission	Dec. 2	5:30 p.m.	SDCES
17	Mitchell	Nov. 17	6:00 p.m.	SDCES
18	Mobridge	Nov. 18	5:00 p.m.	SDCES
19	Philip	Nov. 17	5:30 p.m.	SDCES
20	Pierre	Nov. 17	5:30 p.m.	SDCES
21	Rapid City	Nov. 3	11:00 a.m.	JTVF
21	Rapid City	Nov. 4	5:00 p.m.	JTVF
21	Rapid City	Dec. 16	4:30 p.m.	JTVF
22	Redfield	Oct. 20	5:30 p.m.	NESDCAP
23	Reliance	Nov. 14	5:00 p.m.	SDCES
24	Sioux Falls	Nov. 3	11:00 a.m.	SFACF
24	Sioux Falls	Nov. 4	11:30 a.m.	SFACF
24	Sioux Falls	Nov. 4	5:30 p.m.	SFACF
24	Sioux Falls	Nov. 5	11:30 a.m.	SFACF
24	Sioux Falls	Nov. 5	5:30 p.m.	SFACF
25	Sisseton	Nov. 10	10:30 a.m.	NESDCAP
26	Tyndall	Nov. 19	6:00 p.m.	SDCES
27	Vermillion	Nov. 20	8:30 a.m.	SDCES
28	Watertown	Nov. 15	6:00 p.m.	SDCES
29	Webster	Nov. 3	5:30 p.m.	NESDCAP

About the Sessions

Sessions were generally three hours in length. Most sessions were held in the late afternoon and evening, after primary work hours. A primary facilitator explained the process and kept it moving. Most conveners also had a master recorder and note takers at each table group of generally six to eight people.

Session Goals

The meetings were structured to:

- Enable participants to learn about South Dakota data and what's coming in the future;
- Connect with others through conversations;
- Hear about how people talk about the future and the things that present challenges;
- Generate ideas *together* about how to address tough problems; and
- Influence decisions in the state and in communities.

Session Process

The following meeting outline was followed in all 35 sessions:

- **Introductions and open-ended questions.** The meeting started with brief introductions and an open-ended question about what people love about South Dakota.
- **Gathering participant demographic information.** Next all meeting participants were introduced to Turning Point™ technology—hand-held clickers—that were used throughout the meeting. This technology enabled individuals to vote anonymously and to gather quantitative data from the session. The first exercise involved gathering demographic information about the participants. (See pages 28 – 29 for the demographic overview.)
- **Identification of key state issues.** Rather than start with a totally open-ended question, the discussion of concerns began by asking participants to vote on which of nine issues facing South Dakota they perceived to be the biggest issue. The top nine issues were identified during a telephone poll of South Dakota citizens in 2009.

The goal of this exercise was to narrow the list to the top two issues of concern. After the initial vote, additional trend data compiled by Wilder Research was provided to the group in printed handouts and in an audio-visual format. The charts and graphs included in this report and on pages 37 – 47 were also provided to participants. The group then engaged in further discussion about the issues. (See page 30 for an overview of the session votes on the nine top concerns.)
- **Defining “elements” of those top issues.** In an effort to make large, complex issues more actionable, conversation and another round of voting helped to more narrowly define the top concerns. For example, if the top vote getter was “the economy,” participants were asked to identify key components (e.g., small businesses can’t make it in rural areas, not enough high-paying jobs, migration of youth out of the state, diminishing tax base, loss of farming revenue, etc.), and then voted again to identify the top element(s).

- **Generating ideas and solutions.** After discussing the elements, participants were asked to suggest ideas and solutions to the top elements. These, too, were put to a vote for favorite solution or idea with the greatest promise. In some sessions the participants had time to discuss both of their top concerns. In other sessions, the discussion was so robust that they only had time to discuss their top issue.
- **Evaluation questions.** At the end of the session, facilitators asked participants several questions to get their input about the process.

The Bush Foundation also contracted with the Citizen's League of Minnesota for use of their [CitiZing.org](https://www.citizing.org/) civic networking tool that allows the review of all session notes and results. It also provides an opportunity for all citizens to share their ideas and input on issues important to them and stay informed about next steps.

Additional Data

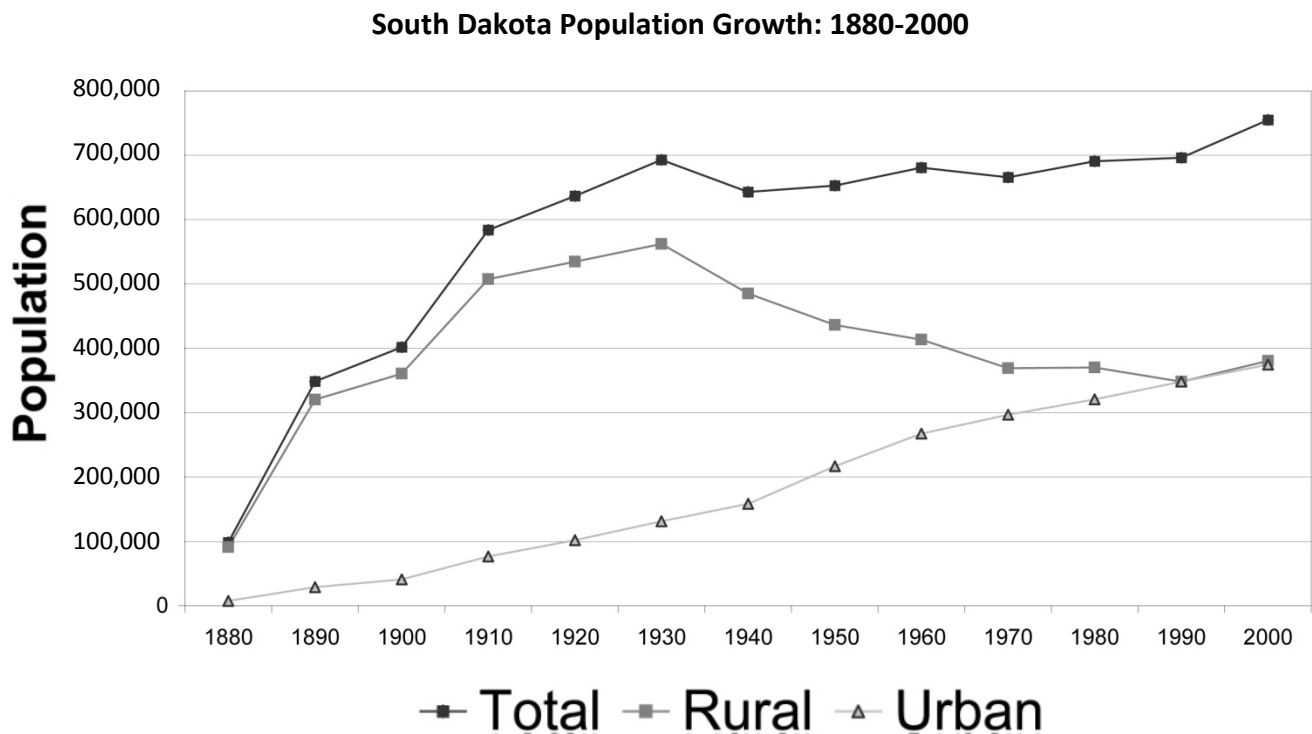
In August 2010, Wilder Research prepared a research report for the Bush Foundation on various trends affecting South Dakota. Below are some of the charts that were gathered as part of that research and shared with the participants in the *Prospects & Possibilities* sessions to help inform their conversations. The charts and graphs included in the body of the report were also part of the handouts provided to session participants.

As you read this, keep in mind that various agencies collect and report data about these topics, analyzing and interpreting it in different ways. The Bush Foundation asserts that citizens and state legislatures need access to understandable and reliable data, along with good processes for discussing the meaning of the data as it impacts their communities.

Population Trends

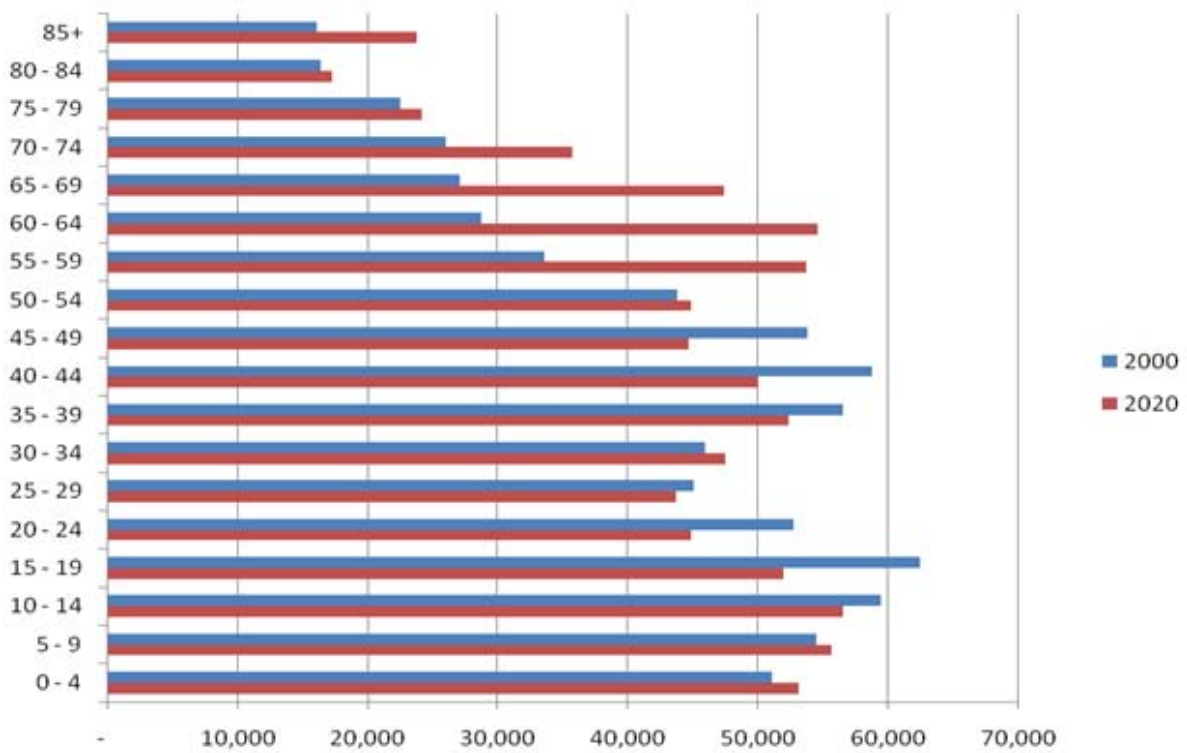
The population in South Dakota is slowly growing near urban hubs along the I-29 corridor and in areas with recreational services such as the Black Hills due to both rural migration and in-migration from neighboring states, while the rural population in 54 of South Dakota's 66 counties continues to decline due to limited educational and employment opportunities. This population movement creates concerns for counties that are either losing or gaining population.

In addition, the old-age dependency ratio – the proportion of older adults to working-age adults – is exacerbated in the counties losing population and is expected to increase sharply in the next two decades.



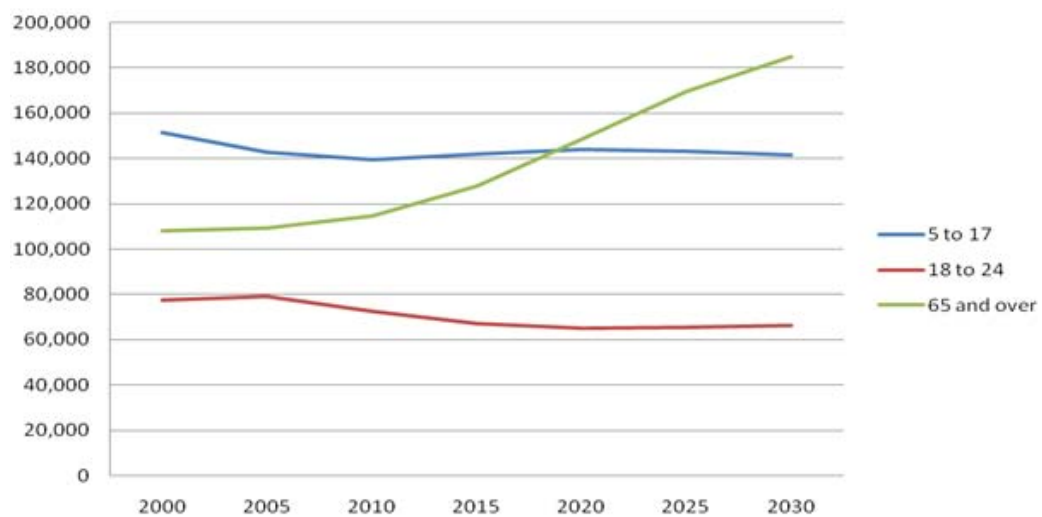
Source: Rural Life Census Data Center. Olson "A Graphic Summary of South Dakota."

Population by Age: South Dakota, 2000 and 2020 (Projected)



Source: Wilder Research from U.S. Census Bureau and State Demographic Center Projections

Population by Age: South Dakota, 2000 – 2030

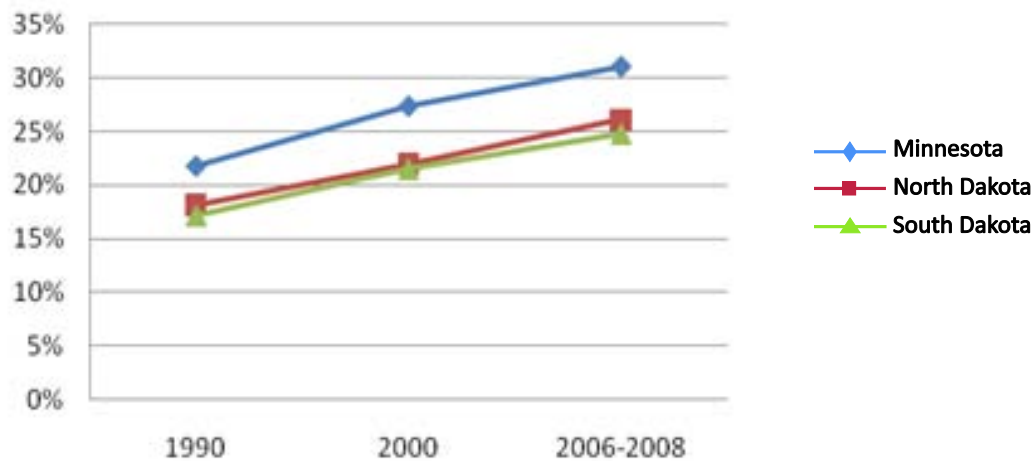


Source: Compiled by Wilder Research from U.S. Census Bureau data

Education Trends

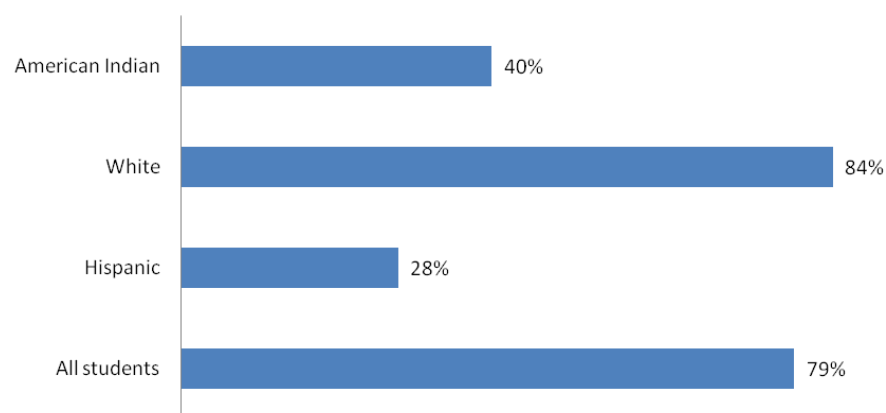
The supply of workers with a postsecondary education has increased in the past decade, but educational attainment is lower in most communities of color relative to the white population. About half of African American students and less than half of American Indian and Hispanic students graduate high school. On the other hand, among South Dakotans with advanced degrees, the rate is higher among foreign-born residents than among those born in the U.S.

Percent (Age 25+) with a Bachelors Degree or Higher: 1990 – 2008



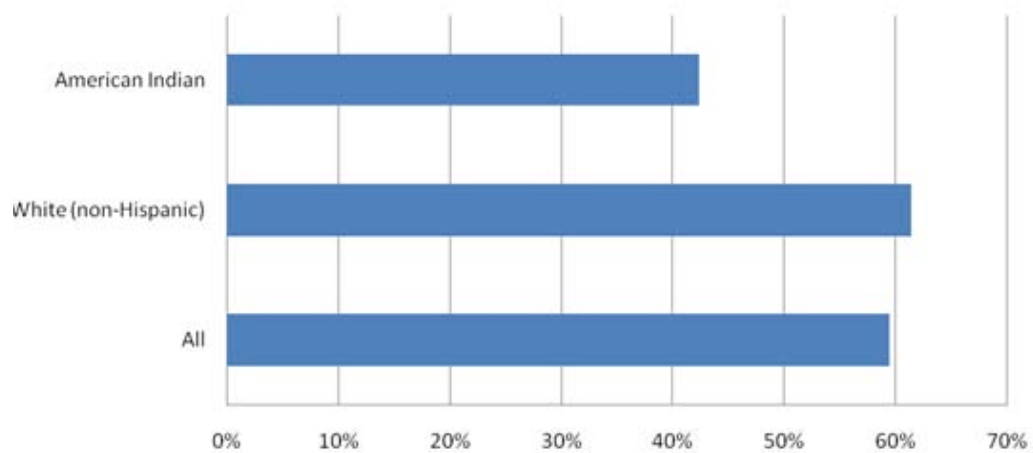
Source: Wilder Research compiled from IPUMS-ACS

**High School Students Graduating On Time
by Racial and Ethnic Group: South Dakota, 2006**



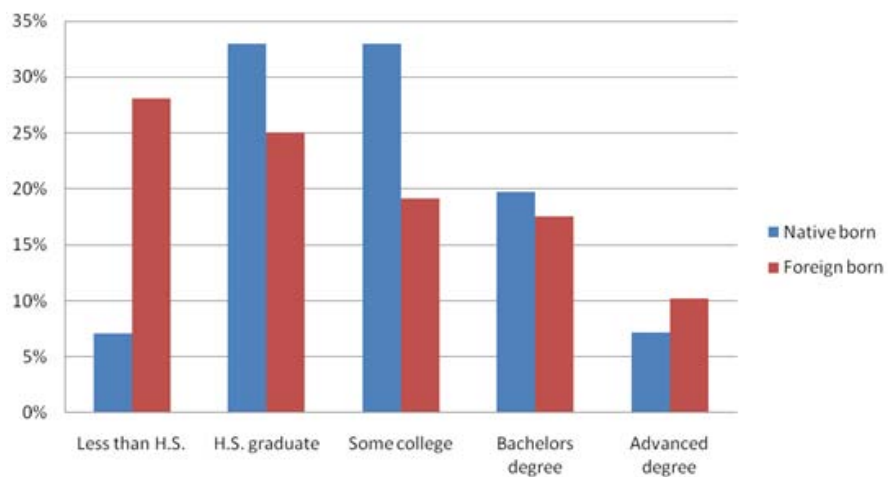
Source: Alliance for Excellent Education

Percentage (Age 25-64) with a Postsecondary Education: South Dakota, 2006 – 2008



Source: Wilder Research compiled from IPUMS-ACS

Educational Attainment of Residents (Age 25-64) by Nativity: South Dakota, 2006 – 2008

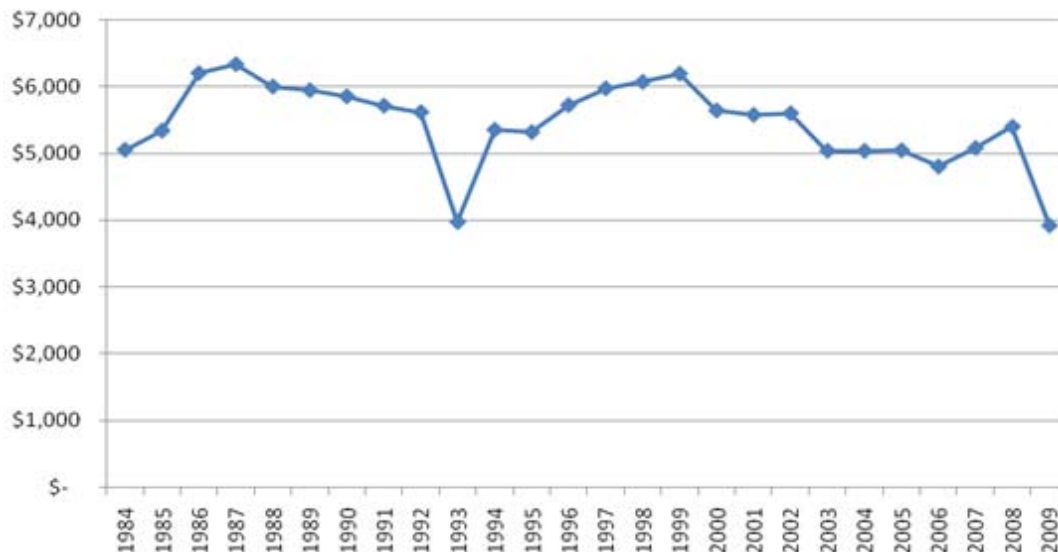


Source: Wilder Research compiled from IPUMS-ACS

State Funding for Higher Education and Student Debt

As higher education funding per student and total appropriations have declined and become a smaller part of state spending over the past decade, higher education institutions have relied increasingly on tuition to cover expenses, making college relatively less affordable.

State Appropriation for Higher Education per FTE Student: South Dakota, 1984 – 2009

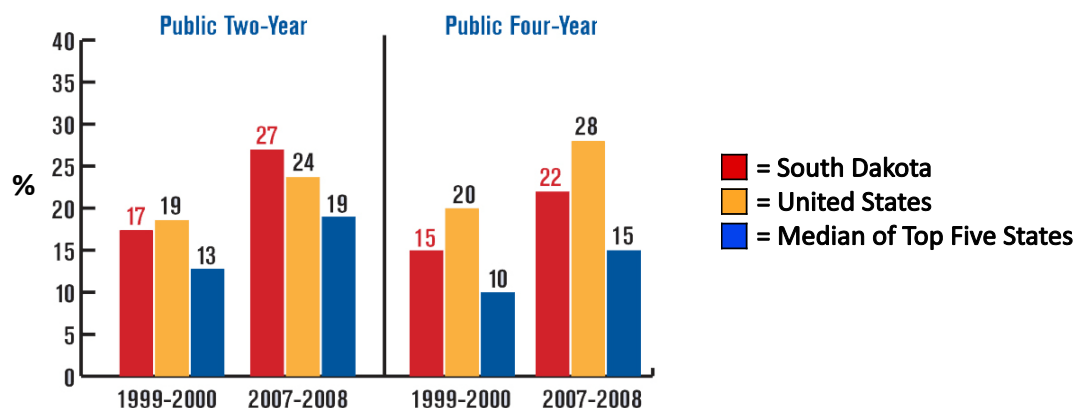


Source: State Higher Education Executive Officers. sheeo.org/finance/shef/shef_data09.htm

Affordability of College

Students in public two-year colleges in South Dakota pay more than the U.S. average. Those in public four-year colleges pay less than the national average but more than those in the top-performing states.

Percentage of Income Needed to Pay for Public Two- and Four-Year Colleges



Source: The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, *Measuring Up 2008*
measuringup2008.highereducation.org/print/state_reports/long/SD.pdf

South Dakota Student Enrollment and Completion

In South Dakota, out of every 100 students, 82 graduate high school, 59 enroll in college, and 29 earn some type of a college degree.



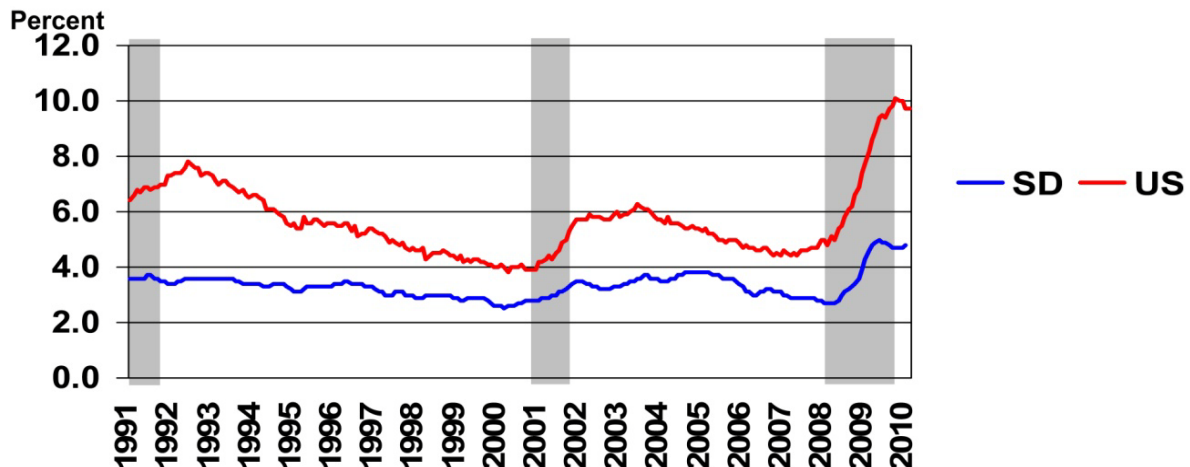
Sources: South Dakota Department of Education, No Child Left Behind 2009 Report Card and National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS)

Labor Force and Economic Growth Outlook

Job losses in South Dakota are well below the national average and appear to have stabilized in the last year. Nevertheless, non-farm income remains below the state average over the past decade.

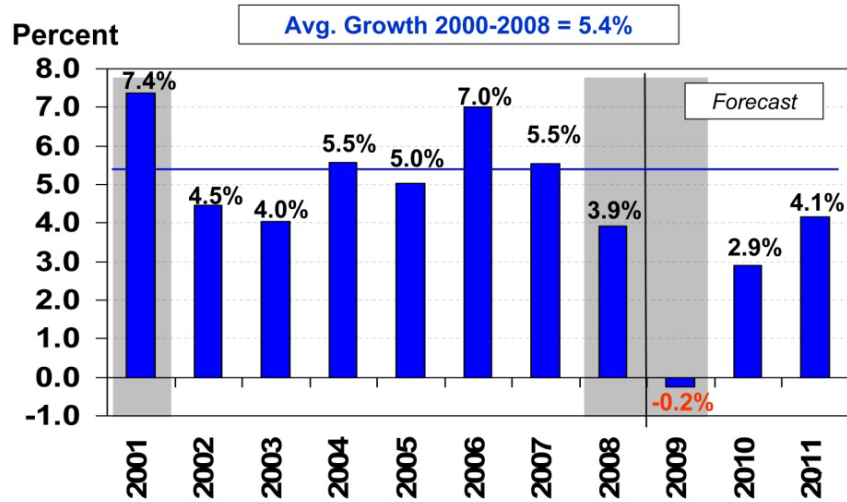
According to the South Dakota State Rural Life and Census Data Center, large corporate farms are continuing to replace small family farms, with services being lost or spread over a larger geographic area and with schools closing or consolidating. As populations drop, retail businesses lack the market share to survive.

Unemployment Rates Have Stabilized; South Dakota's Rate Still Well Below the Nation



Source: South Dakota Bureau of Finance and Management state.sd.us/bfm/econ/RevenueEstimates2010_slides.pdf

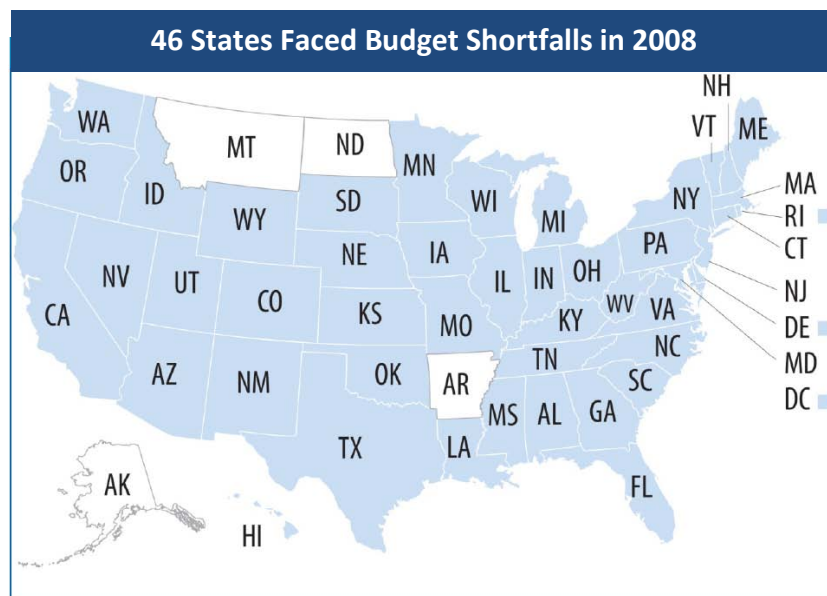
South Dakota Nonfarm Income Growth Forecast to Be Below Average Levels



Source: South Dakota Bureau of Finance and Management state.sd.us/bfm/econ/RevenueEstimates2010_slides.pdf

State Budget Outlook

South Dakota was among the 46 states experiencing budget shortfalls in 2008 and more shortfalls are expected.

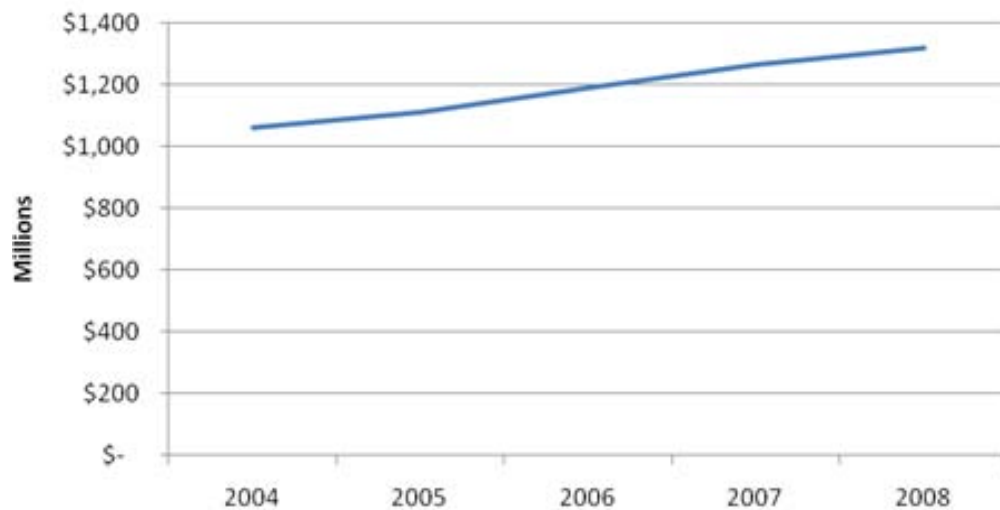


Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities cbpp.org/files/9-8-08sfp.pdf

Revenue and Spending Trends

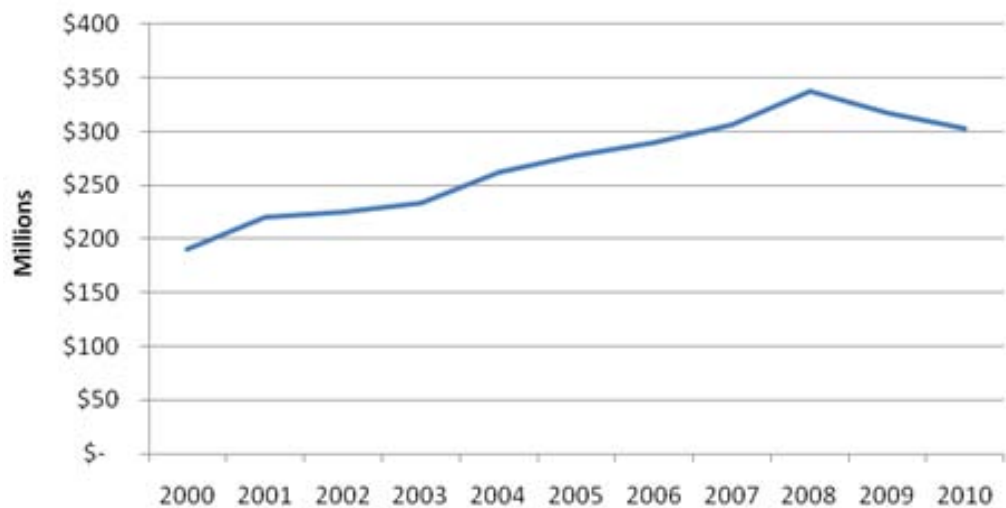
According to the U.S. Census Bureau, tax revenue increased modestly in South Dakota from 2004 to 2008, and then declined in 2009 and 2010. The intergovernmental sources of state revenue in South Dakota (mostly from the federal government) remained fairly stable until 2008, but more federal borrowing and aid to state governments occurred after 2008.

Total State Revenue from Taxes: South Dakota, 2004 – 2008



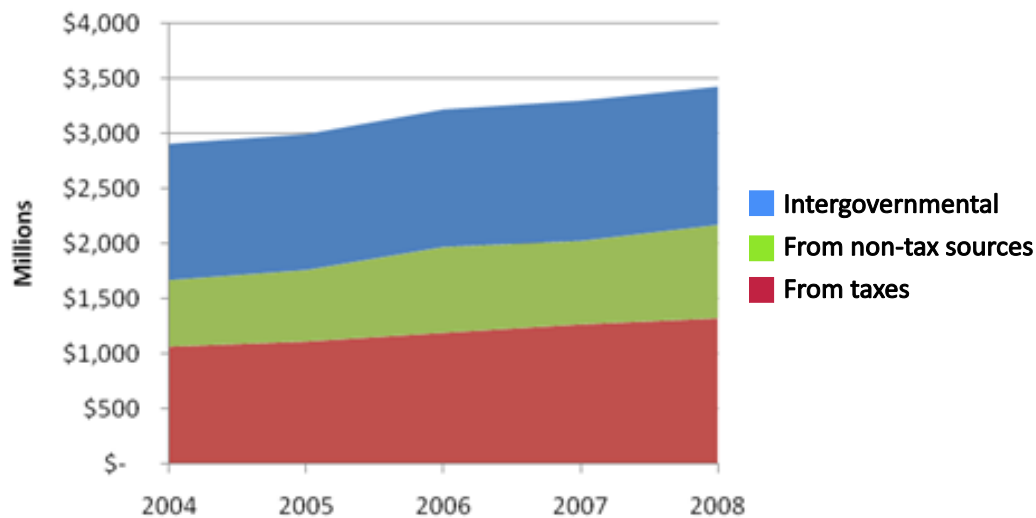
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Annual survey of state and local government finance census.gov/qovs/estimate

Total First Quarter State Tax Revenue: South Dakota, 2000 – 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Quarterly Summary of State and Local Tax Revenue census.gov/qovs/qtax

State Revenue by Type: South Dakota, 2004 – 2008



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Annual survey of state and local government finance census.gov/govs/estimate

Health Care Coverage and Access

Slightly more than half of South Dakota residents have health insurance coverage through an employer; more than a quarter have public coverage, including 15 percent on Medicare; about 8 percent purchase insurance coverage in the private market (nearly double the national average), and 11 percent are uninsured (statehealthfacts.org).

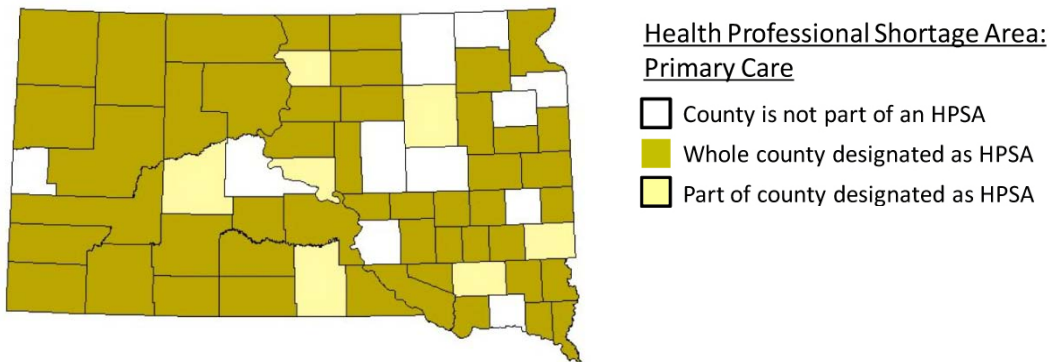
By about 2019, the 65+ population is predicted to exceed the school-age (5-17) population in South Dakota for the first time. Between 2010 and 2030, the 65+ population, with the highest prevalence of disabilities and the greatest health care costs, is expected to grow by more than 50 percent.

Because of the increasing older adult population in South Dakota, Medicare, which currently covers about 15 percent of the population, will continue to grow as a major health care payer (statehealthfacts.org).

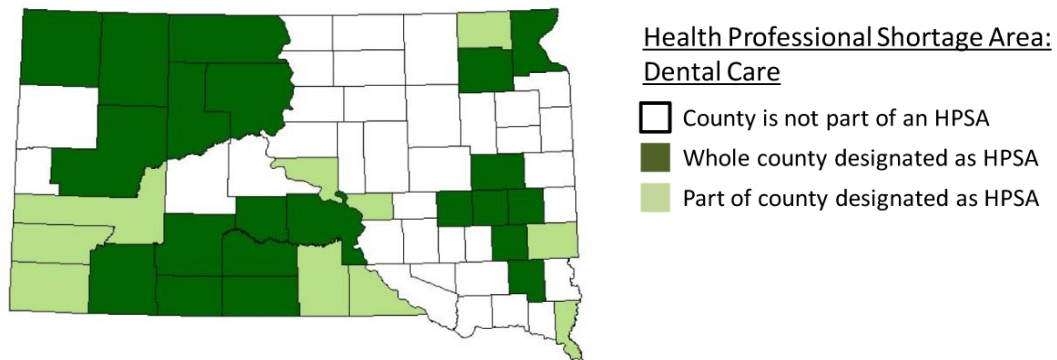
Access to primary care physicians and mental health professionals is a key challenge in South Dakota. In 2007, of the 66 counties in South Dakota, only 11 counties had adequate primary care health professional coverage, and only three counties had adequate mental health professional coverage.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services designates Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) for primary medical care, dentists and mental health professionals. The maps on the next page present the HPSA status of South Dakota counties in 2007. The maps originate from RUPRI State Demographic & Economic Profiles: South Dakota (rupri.org) and statehealthfacts.org (Health Reform Factsheet) for residents in primary care shortage area with data from the Bureau of Health Professions, HHS data accessed from the Area Resource File Health Resources and Services Administration, HHS.

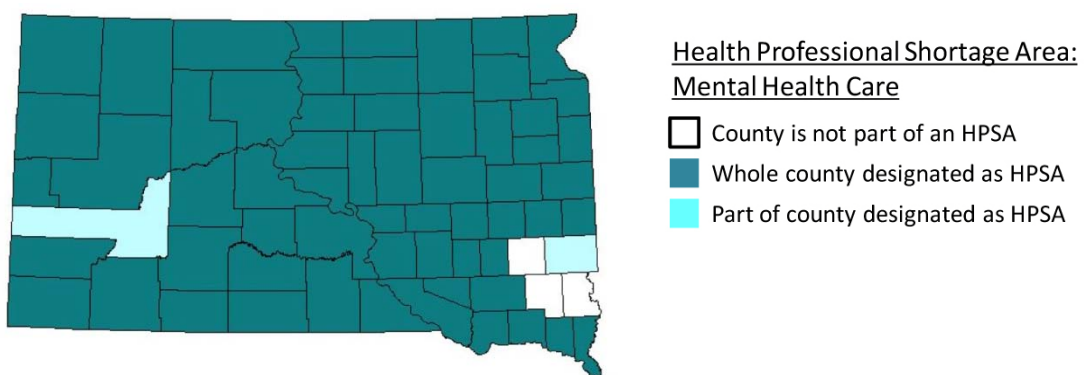
Counties in Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA): Primary Care, 2007



Counties in Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA): Dental Care, 2007



Counties in Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA): Mental Health Care, 2007



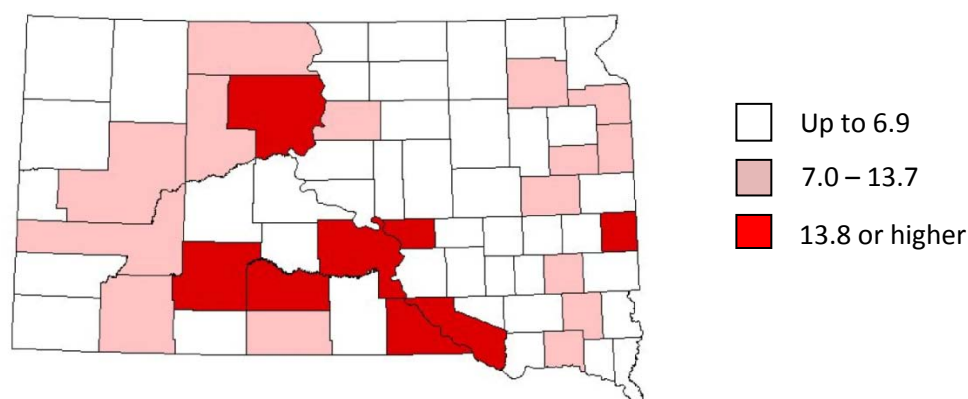
Source: RUPRI State Demographic & Economic Profiles: South Dakota. rupri.org and statehealthfacts.org.

Key Health Issues in South Dakota

Infant Mortality

The infant mortality rates are a five-year average of infant deaths per 1,000 live births. The infant mortality rate is 6.9 (0.69%) for both the U.S. and South Dakota. Twenty-three counties in South Dakota had an infant mortality rate higher than the U.S. average; of those 23, eight counties had a rate more than double the national average. Generally these counties also have very high poverty rates and a large share of the population that is American Indian.

Infant Mortality Rate, 2000-2004 Five-Year Average: Deaths per 1,000 Live Births

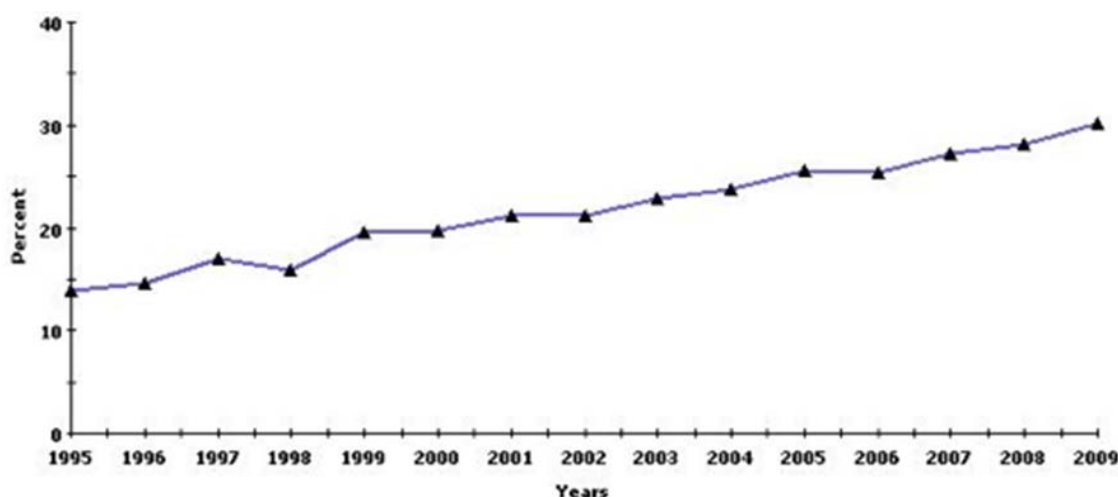


Source: RUPRI. rupri.org.

Obesity in South Dakota

About 30 percent of South Dakota adults age 18+ were obese in 2009, more than double the rate in 1995. An additional 37 percent were overweight. In addition, more than one in four (28%) South Dakota children age 10-17 were overweight or obese (2007).

Overweight and Obesity (BMI)



Source: Wilder Research, CDC's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. National Survey of Children's Health. Childhealthdata.org.

Additional Resources – South Dakota

Below are some websites that provide additional data and resources for the state of South Dakota.

Attracting Business to South Dakota

sreadytowork.com

Media Contact:

Mary Lehecka Nelson

711 E Wells Ave

Pierre, SD 57501-3369

Phone: (605) 773-3301

Toll Free: (800) 872-6190

email: Mary.LeheckaNelson@state.sd.us

Education Issues

Teacher Salaries –

teacherssalaryinfo.com/average-teacher-salary-south-dakota.html

South Dakota Incentive Fund – awarded in June 2007, duration 5 years

cecr.ed.gov/profiles/pdfs/South_Dakota.pdf

State Teaching Job Initiatives

Associated School Boards of South Dakota –

teachingjobsportal.com/states/south-dakota-teaching-jobs

Dakota ASSETS – dakotaassets.tie.net/content/overview.htm

Health Care

South Dakota Healthcare Workforce Center – doh.sd.gov/ruralhealth/workforce

Contact: Halley Lee at (605) 773-6320 or halley.lee@state.sd.us